

VOL. I

MARCH 1924

NO. 3

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

A MONTHLY REVIEW

EDITED BY H · L · MENCKEN
& GEORGE JEAN NATHAN



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March 1924

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Published monthly at 50 cents a copy. Annual subscription, \$5.00; Canadian subscription, \$5.50; foreign

subscription \$6.00. . . . The American Mercury, Inc., publishers. Publication office, Federal and 19th Streets, Camden, N. J. Editorial, advertising and subscription offices, 730 Fifth Avenue, New York. . . . Printed in the United States. Copyright, 1924, by The American Mercury, Inc. . . . Application for entry as second-class matter pending. . . . Four weeks advance notice required for change of subscribers' addresses.

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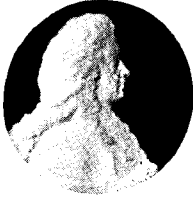
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March 1924

CRETHEUS AND THE LIONS

BY STEPHEN FRENCH WHITMAN

ON a fragrant night of June, a great change reached its climax in the heart of Cretheus, and he determined to renounce the world. Having donned a robe belonging to one of his slaves, he walked for the last time through his great and splendid house, in order to bid a contemptuous farewell to all its beauties. The door-porter inquired at what hour the master would return. "Never," Cretheus answered, and went down through his gardens into the wicked city.

Around him in the soft night he observed the people sauntering to their follies. The torches in the theatre cast a nimbus against the sky. Symbolic lamps illuminated the Temple of Aphrodite. From under the plane-trees there issued the shouts of gamblers, the laughter of women, the music of the flute-players, the cries of the venders of sweetened snow from the mountain. And all about the town given up to its licentiousness, on the dark hillsides blotched with the flowering of magnolias and oleanders, twinkled the lights in the palaces of the rich, from whose colonnades and groves descended a faint clatter of revelry.

"Hapless people!" Cretheus groaned. "In your blindness you are preparing yourselves to be delivered, bound hand and foot, at the door of hell itself!"

Passing out through the city gate, he

shook from his feet the dust of the place where he had been powerful, wealthy, reckless, drunken, and steeped in terrestrial love. Cretheus journeyed for three days and three nights, and arrived in the midst of the desert.

The huge undulations of gold and amethystine sand extended to the horizon, behind which the sun was setting in a glory of gold and ashes of rose. Before the traveler there emerged from the sand a little hill of rock. In the face of the rock was the cave that God had prepared in the beginning for the habitation of Cretheus.

But Cretheus found reclining in the cave a lioness and two lions.

He was filled with the delicious calmness that he had earned by his days and nights of solitude. "Fear nothing of me, little lions," he besought them, although they were not little—that was merely a diminutive of tenderness. "We are all in fact God's children. Let us then try to prove ourselves to be so, by loving one another."

The two lions and the lioness, crouching with their bellies against the floor of the cave, regarded Cretheus in terror; for they perceived that he had no fear of them. And when, on second thought, they bared their teeth at him, and attempted rattling barks of intimidation, he laid his hands upon their heads, and stroked their ears.

One lion, very old, was black-maned; the other was yellow-maned and young. The lioness also was young, and beautiful. Finally, assured that they were in no immediate danger, they seated themselves before him, and the lioness rolled on her back coquettishly at his feet, with her dainty paws in the air.

So Cretheus and the lions began to live together in the cave of the desert.

From the foot of the rocky hill a little spring of cold water gushed out into the sand; and there a wild date-palm bore its stony and providential fruit for Cretheus' nourishment. He rose at dawn, and, fasting, meditated on the true natures of God and man. At evening, when the lions and the lioness would have gone out to seek their prey, he preached them sermons, in which he pointed out to them the naughtiness of slaying their fellow-creatures, and promised that, if they trusted in God, they would be provided for in some more seemly way. He also sought to inculcate in the beautiful lioness the virtue of chastity. The three beasts, cowed by the words of Cretheus, slunk back into the recesses of the cave. But it is not unlikely that when Cretheus was asleep they slipped out into the desert for their meat. For sometimes, in the morning, they seemed lethargic and bloated; their breath when he caressed them was fetid; and they avoided his affectionate gaze with a look as if of shame in their amber eyes.

II

After Cretheus had lived in the cave of the desert for a year, he was greatly emaciated; his hair and beard were very long; his skin was as dark as the skin of a Libyan; and his robe had become a few tatters bound about his loins. Moreover, his face was changed; for he had spent all his time in separating in his mind the world of good (*Animus Dei*) from the world of evil (*Anima Mundi*). And he had tried patiently every day to impart his thoughts to the lions.

In consequence of his many sermons and great vigilance, the lions had grown, as it appeared, quite meek, and even seemed smaller than at first. But sometimes, when Cretheus was not looking at them, they regarded him subtly. Then, hiding their faces with their paws, they flicked their long tasseled tails from side to side, as if a prey to secret and dangerous thoughts. But the fair lioness, with the more exquisite duplicity of her sex, rubbed her fine coat against the knees of Cretheus, and purred as she looked at him with the loving attention of a woman who is plotting the humiliation of her lord and master.

"How gentle they are!" said Cretheus, with happy tears in his eyes. "Where the spirit of God is received into the heart Heaven exists."

Then one night he awoke to perceive that the old black-maned lion was not in the cave. At the same time he heard a clashing in the desert. It was Laomedon, a great general and an old acquaintance of his, approaching in the cool of the night to visit him.

Laomedon appeared at the mouth of the cave in a blaze of flames and of armor. Stooping his massive head, which was encased in brass and crested with vermillion horse-hair, he entered, bidding his officers remain outside. They obeyed, forming on the stony platform a bright wall of breastplates embossed with the deeds of Herakles and the Heroes, before which dripped down the sparks from the fat torches. Vibrations of carnal dignity and force filled the cave. Laomedon, seating himself upon a block of stone, shook his head disparagingly.

"So you have come to this, my poor Cretheus," he rumbled. "Are you, then, insane?"

"No, Laomedon," answered Cretheus, "I am happy."

"What have you found here?" the general demanded. "Is there an ancient treasure in the depths of this cave, and are you guarding it till you can escape with

it? Is it a place of magic, from which you hope to send forth spells, and gain a world? Or have you found somewhere a woman on whose account you feel so terrible a jealousy that you must hide her here?"

"No," said Cretheus serenely, "I have found God."

Laomedon's hard old face expressed commiseration. He mused regretfully:

"I am a soldier, a politician, and a practical man, and cannot discuss religious matters with you. I do for myself, and ask nothing of any god. Yet I am great, healthy, and rich; and I inspire fear. In fact, I myself am a god to innumerable people, creating or destroying their happiness, giving or taking their lives. When, having captured a city, I stand upon the walls, the groans of the dying, the screams of ravished women, rise up to me amid the smoke and the flames like incense, offered to my power. It is said that Zeus casts thunderbolts. I cast the lightning of my army against my enemies. In strange lands people feel a greater dread of me than of their most vindictive deities. I have seen tyrants faint from terror when brought into my presence; but nobody faints before the altars of the gods. For they are far off, while I am here. I exist—perhaps they do not. Perhaps they live merely in the minds of men. As for me, I have never felt weakness nor fear; so I have never had need of them. Of what were you afraid, my Cretheus, that you felt the need of a god?"

Cretheus, rising, walked to and fro. The young lion and the young lioness regarded him anxiously from the recesses of the cavern. He stood still before the general, who resembled, indeed, some sort of divinity, huge, square, implacable of attitude and dense of visage, surrounded by rays of light that struck in, through the entrance of the cave, upon his armor and helmet.

Cretheus, extending his wasted arms, spoke as follows:

"What should one fear, Laomedon, but one's conscience? All my life I was a wastrel and a profligate. The sweat of my

agricultural slaves provided a strange jewel for some flighty girl, or perhaps the years of toil that broke them down sufficed to buy an erotic medallion in chrysoprase or jasper. At dawn I often lay on my dining-couch overcome with wine and snorting like a pig, while my people were being driven into the fields with blows. One night a servant let fall a drop of sauce on the robe of Limnanthi, the Milesian, who reclined beside me; and because she was angry I let him be beaten to death. I did many other things which I need not confess. At last a light providentially broke forth before my eyes; and I perceived by that light what I had been doing to others and to myself."

Laomedon protested:

"The sweat of slaves, the tears of silly women, the deaths of sundry men—whether killed for a whim or to advance one's fortunes—what does that amount to? How can one live like a gentleman without using the labor of others, or shedding a little blood from time to time? It is unseemly to disgrace one's caste by such actions as these. Conscience, remorse, brotherly love, and religion are for the lower classes, they themselves, no doubt, having invented such soporifics in order to make their lives seem easier."

Cretheus made a gesture of compassion.

"Laomedon," he asked mildly, "are you trying to destroy my new-born soul? Never mind: I do not regard you as an enemy, but pity and love you."

Sighing, Laomedon responded:

"Some angry woman who knows the abodes of the witches must have given you a philtre, to produce this effect. And I came here because I, in return, love you, as I might have loved my son if he had lived. When I heard that you had forsaken the wine-cups and wreaths, I told myself that you were preparing, in solitude, to live a different life, perhaps of energy and genius, grandeur and victory, in the service of the State. In my vain imagination I saw myself instructing you in all the arts of triumph. One day or

another even I must die; but if you listened to me, and then received my sword, I should live on in you."

Cretheus inquired:

"What is it, dear Laomedon, that you have to offer me?"

The yellow-maned lion and the lioness raised their heads high again.

"I offer you the exaltation of predestined victories," Laomedon declared. "I offer the thrill of planting the heel upon the necks of nations. You shall walk amid fields of corpses and say, 'I have sown this seed.' Night shall be like day for you, in the light of burning cities. Returning home, with kings yoked to your chariot-pole, you shall see your gilded statue already erected, and receive the Fatherland into your keeping."

Cretheus explained:

"But I am satisfied to be the conqueror of that man which I have been."

The young lion and the lioness let their heads sink down upon the floor of the cave. Laomedon departed.

III

Standing on the platform of rock before the cave, Cretheus watched the departing cortège of Laomedon. They had extinguished their torches; but the full moon had now risen; and one could see the general, his officers, and the escorting squadron rapidly riding over the silvery billows of sand, like a cavalcade of little images made of silver. At last they were lost in the glitter of stars that extended to the horizon. And a sensation of loneliness and futility descended into the soul of Cretheus.

He had unavoidably pictured himself as a general in flashing armor and vermillion crest, riding toward victories that could never be forgotten.

At dawn the old black-maned lion returned to the cave, avoiding the eyes of Cretheus with a look of guilt.

"Oh, what have you been doing, little brother!" cried Cretheus.

But the old black-maned lion made no response.

Cretheus became more assiduous than ever in pious meditation. Sometimes he remained in one attitude, oblivious of everything physical. Then, for a week, neither eating nor drinking, he contemplated—or so it seemed to him—the ultimate truth of existence, while all around him there appeared as it were a glow of heavenly fire.

"Now," he thought blissfully, "I am indeed with God."

Two months were gone since the visit of Laomedon. On a night of orange moonlight, in the height of the canicular heat, when the beautiful lioness had slipped out into the desert, a gust of perfume filled the cave. Helopsychria, the lovely hetaira, appeared before Cretheus, wearing many emeralds, sheer jonquil-yellow robes, and grass-green sandals.

IV

When she had entered the cave with her well-known, slow, undulating step, Helopsychria smiled sadly. She pronounced, in a voice like a threnody of Phrygian pipes: "So you have indeed lost everything, Cretheus? Do not be downcast any longer on that account. The Tender Goddess has sent you a treasure, myself, for whom tyrants and satraps would eagerly exchange their hoards of gold, their marbles, their gems, and the trophies of their ancestors."

A little blind slave-girl entered behind Helopsychria, bearing an ivory box inlaid, in mother-of-pearl, with the amours of Zeus. Sinking down, the child placed the box before her on the floor.

On the sands of the desert, two Ethiopian camelmen made the two camels kneel, as if they expected to wait there patiently for a long while.

Cretheus wondered why Helopsychria was not afraid of the two lions, who stood attentive in the shadows behind him. Then he remembered that she had never been afraid of beast or man, or of any-

thing whatever except time. She stood with her neck slightly bent, leaning her weight on one foot, the outline of her incomparable figure revealed through the folds of her robe, against the moonlight. The splendor of her green eyes, and of her broad emerald necklace, pervaded the cavern. Her yellow hair, dressed in the triple rows of curls, was so tightly bound that her head seemed negligible, her body all-important. Yet Cretheus knew that in that little head was stored an immensity of guile, a profound talent for temptation, an amorous fatality that could be escaped by no man who was at any point unfortified by God.

He began to pray.

"But my dear, it is unnecessary to pray," Helopsychria remarked, "for I am already present."

"Helopsychria," said Cretheus firmly, "I am not he whom you knew in those other days."

Her ripe lips trembled. And Cretheus understood that he was more desirable to this woman than before, because of the novelty bestowed on him by his new, saintly face.

"I warn you," Cretheus announced, "that the world of pleasures and crimes, from which you come as an emissary and example, has no longer any power over me. In fact, it has ceased to exist, melting away before that heavenly reality amid which I have come to live. Go, beautiful phantom! Dissolve into the nothingness of which you are typical! Leave me with God, whose ineffable universe is the true and only one."

"But I, too, exist," Helopsychria protested more melodiously than ever. "My pulse beats. A warmth stirs even now in my body. I feel an ecstasy growing in my brain. Lay your hand beneath my breast, Cretheus; feel my quick heart; and then, if you can, say that I do not live."

The two lions, fawning round her feet in admiration, licked her little pink toes, which appeared between the grass-green thongs of her sandals, and which were so

rouged that they shone like carnelians.

But Helopsychria had eyes for Cretheus alone. She continued:

"I am not unacquainted, my dear, with the idea of holiness. All those who enter the Orphic Mysteries do so with a sense of what they call evil, and with an imaginary need of purification. Nor are you the first man whom I have known to shrink from the beneficence of my goddess. I have been told before that love has its bitterness. But may there not be a greater bitterness in the absence of love?"

"The end of sin is death," Cretheus retorted in an awful voice.

"Is not the end of piety also death? I have heard that all the Initiators and Mystagoges teach a future life: but what superior power would dream of perpetuating us? In my opinion, one is sure of this hour only, and ought to fill it with joy."

"The goddess you serve," he returned bitterly, "is Aphrodite, in all her names, manifestations, attributes, and habits. But my God is not attained by kisses; the perfect peace at his disposal is not predicated on satiety, unless on that satiety which is disgust at everything unlike him. No, Helopsychria, you have made this journey for nothing. I no longer understand the words uttered by your tongue."

The little blind slave-girl wiped some tears from her eyes with the back of her hand. The lions, making themselves as flat upon the pavement as if they were rugs of skins, hid their unhappy faces under the hem of Helopsychria's robes. She cast around her a long, humid, yearning glance.

"I should have liked to regain your affection in this cave. I am so weary of my house with its marbles, its pillars garlanded with flowers, its garden in which butterflies kiss the lips of my statue of Eros. There, on all sides, I see nothing but luxurious objects. This is different. I could remain here happily for seven days and nights. On one of my camels are cages containing doves, sacred to my dear Mistress. We could suspend those cages here

and there, and all day long an amorous cooing would be redoubled and enlarged by echoes. And then I have brought with me carpets, vases, perfumes, pillows, fans, wine, luxurious foods, and lutes—but nowadays perhaps you scorn such things. No matter: I should be able to devise a thousand tricks for transfiguring this place with simple and touching beauties. And even if there were no cooing of doves, even if you forbade the carpets and the perfumes, love would be here."

Cretheus turned his back on her.

"O God," he thought, "thou knowest that this woman is not actual, but merely some involuntary guilty thought of mine. I mean to say, Thou dost not know it; for Thou hast never contemplated evil. Nevertheless, save me!"

Her voice stole forth to him like a caress.

"Cretheus, it is not as hard as you imagine to yield to love. You have only to think about it, to determine not to think about it, to peep at it askance, to flee, while drawing nearer to it, to picture its realization, while denying that it can ever again have reality for you. Thought is always the creator. Think, Cretheus. Or better still, remember."

She spoke softly in another language to the small blind slave. The child produced from the ivory box, among other things, a double flute. Faint music began. With his mind's eye, Cretheus perceived some scenes of childhood, full of innocent happiness, and a little girl, now dead, whose cheek he had kissed one day in Spring, under the almond-blossoms. Despite him, the thin wedge of love, pointed with that lost chastity and adolescent joy, entered Cretheus' breast.

"Look at me," breathed Helopsychria.

She appeared a different person. Her robe was of white wool. Her hair was dressed like the hair of a girl. Her countenance was young, pure, and arch. Her jewels and her grass-green sandals had disappeared. One no longer smelled her perfume. She threw over her head a bridal veil, and blushed.

"Am I not she—immaculate of mind, constant, devoted for a lifetime—whose image all men bear in the most secret depths of their minds?"

He gave a cry of grief.

"How could you suppose, my Cretheus," she continued in reproachful tones, "that I was offering you anything but this? You shall find in me the bride and wife and mother, the dear and meek helpmate, the companion of your maturity and the comforter of your old age. When you come home you shall see me carding wool, or teaching your little sons to honor you. I will lift up my gaze to yours, and a wave of calm affection shall pass from me to you. All our conversation, as well as our thoughts, shall be noble and frank. We will stand with our arms 'round each other's necks, looking at the stars, and thanking fate that amid all the multitude of beings we have found each other. One of us must die first; and, if it be you, I will close your eyes so softly, and die quickly in my turn, and hasten out there to find you. For there will not exist for me in this world of men any other man; and to have lost you will be to have had my beating heart removed from my bosom, and carried away from me, into the shades."

Cretheus perceived large tears rolling down her cheeks. It seemed to him that he must inevitably clasp her in his arms, and lose himself in the fragrance that enveloped her. He could almost have knelt before her; he could almost have cried out, "Oh, it is you at last!"

Some influence stronger than Cretheus, and stronger even than Helopsychria, kept him motionless. Perhaps the God of Cretheus had been somehow able, despite His absolute goodness, to perceive Helopsychria not as she appeared at this moment, but as she really was. That, however, would be a question for the sophists.

"Cretheus! Cretheus! Cretheus!" she cried imploringly, and stretched out her exquisite arms, which presently fell to her sides. "I have done what I could," she muttered.

She tore off her white wool and her veil, which she threw to the blind child. The latter placed them in the ivory box, together with the flute, meanwhile shedding tears upon them. Helopsychria resumed her emeralds, her grass-green sandals, and her jonquil-yellow robes. She moved proudly, as fair women often do in their defeats, toward the mouth of the cave. There she turned, to have the last word.

"Good-by, Cretheus. I leave you my perfume."

In a flare of temper, she smashed a vial of scent upon the rock; and instantly its highly disturbing sweetness drenched the cave. Even the lions, which had followed her regretfully to the entrance, were spattered all over with it; but they seemed to like it.

Cretheus answered in a hollow voice:

"May you find God, my sister, if indeed you exist."

"Donkey!" Helopsychria spat at him.

She and the little slave-girl, going down to the sand, mounted the two camels, which the two Ethiopians led away into the orange moonlight.

The beautiful lioness returned to the cave at dawn.

V

For a long while the cave was polluted by Helopsychria's perfume. Cretheus, making with great pains a bucket out of palm leaves, brought up spring water and sand, and scrubbed the interior of his abode, using his hands as brushes. In consequence, some of the perfume was transferred to him, so that, awaking in the night with his hands across his nose, he had for a moment a dreadful delusion that Helopsychria had returned and was standing before him in her emeralds. As for the lions, their coats retained the aroma of Helopsychria the longest of all. When Cretheus tried to drag them down to the spring to be washed, they evaded him and bounded about like lambkins.

He redoubled his prayer and fasting. In the course of weeks he thought perhaps

no more than a dozen times a day of the milky arms of Helopsychria, her long eyelashes, and little polished toenails. Then he thought of these things only half a dozen times a day, then only once or twice a day, then not at all. While waiting for the spirit of God to fill the emptiness left in his heart by his forgetting Helopsychria, he composed grateful songs, which he sang to the lions. Their paws extended, they looked at him with an air of sheepishness and boredom, now and then yawning so as to show their black and pink mottled gums, their pink tongues, and their strong back-teeth. Or else, they suddenly ignored him to search for a flea.

One night, three months after Helopsychria's apparition, while the young yellow-maned lion was absent, Thersander, formerly the bosom-friend of Cretheus, sauntered into the cave.

VI

Thersander, freshly shaven, had his hair arranged in waves, and wore a lavender himation, with over this a Tyrian chlamys fastened at the neck by an amethyst brooch. He even had 'round his head a wreath of small pink roses, as though he were coming from an evening party. His litter, embellished with gold, rested below on the sand, beneath a myriad blue stars, surrounded by stalwart Cappadocians, and mules bearing jars of snow to cool the brow and mouth of the elegant Thersander.

He was much amused by the appearance of Cretheus.

"What secret wager are you paying by this performance?" he inquired, laughing. "Now I cannot blame Helopsychria for saying that she came to offer her love to a man, but found, instead, an ass. Yet she must have remained here longer than to take one look at you; for some of her perfume still seems to cling to this den."

"Does it still cling, Thersander?" protested Cretheus woefully. "Ah, when will it evaporate from my lions?"

"What lions are you talking about?"

Thersander asked him in an innocent way, although at that moment the old black-maned lion and the lioness were standing one on each side of him, examining him with every evidence of approbation. "Was Laomedon right? Are you a trifle mad?"

Sitting down upon a stone, he sniffed a small bunch of violets. His plump fingers were covered with rings, the intaglios of which depicted satyrs being pursued by nymphs, Zeus summoning the rivers to Olympus, shepherds enamored of hama-dryads, Zagreus being torn to pieces, and lynxes caressing mænads.

Thersander turned grave, and demanded: "When will you return to your natural life?"

"This is my natural life, now and henceforth forever, but ever more so."

"Alas!" Thersander lamented, "and what of that ideal of existence that you and I planned together? That sublime life—the creation of beauty in living—far above the ignobility of ordinary lives, in a noble and radiant spaciousness that merges with the loveliness of sunshine, mountains, sea, air, and sky! It is true that this ideal may be seized and maintained by an heroic effort only. But I thought that for the sake of beautiful living you would be heroic."

"God and the innumerable parts of him alone are beautiful," said Cretheus in trembling accents.

"You have become so primitive here that I suspect you are speaking of some Olympian," Thersander rejoined sarcastically. "Or have you been converted to mysticism at Eleusis? But I thought you and I had already rarified all divinities, and all mystical interpretations of a god, into a rational and scientific cause. It would not be absurd to admire Nature; but it would be absurd to worship it. As for seeking union with it, that we already have inevitably. But the whole genius of our race is expressed by activity in Nature, not by such passivity as this. Here you are creating nothing, except a very long beard. Moreover, your beard is not beautiful.

Such ugliness and squalor are a crime against the gift of life."

Involuntarily Cretheus wrung his hands, and returned:

"I was becoming happy again. Then you appeared."

"How can that be so?" Thersander objected. "Common sense should have told you that there is no happiness in fruitless introspection."

"There is happiness in the saving of one's soul."

"Your soul," smiled Thersander, in commiseration, "is a fragment of the soul of Nature, which you cannot escape. Your soul will be saved, as you call it, by your acting naturally. You are now acting artificially; and from your aspect I judge that Nature will presently grow over-weary of you, as it invariably does of artificial things. It will find some other use for the atoms that compose you. As you now are, it were better for the beauty of life if you were to fertilize a flower or a melon."

Cretheus was greatly shaken; for he saw in his visitor, as it might be, an exact reflection of his own former self. Since there may be a pathos in the image of one's old likeness—as, for example, when one was ardent, defiant, attractive in the impudence of youth—the soul of Cretheus wept. He saw again the academic groves, and himself walking arm in arm with young men whose world this was, all its manifestations to be joyously accepted, or circumvented, or shaped anew, but never renounced. Theirs had been the aspiration to evolve, from nothing but the materials at hand, a life of richness and fastidiousness and intellectual pride, high above the herd, in a glamour of marble and foliage, to a pessimism ennobled by a determination to be happy, despite all the chances of life and death and fortune.

Cretheus, closing his eyes, prayed:

"O God, be present! For I know that logic was not thy logic, that beauty not thy beauty."

Then suddenly the genius of his God pervaded Cretheus; and he preached to Thersander, and to the old lion and the lioness, with these words:

"Parmenides tells us that logic makes it necessary for us to see the universe as an unchangeable unity. But our senses appear to show us a world of change. This is the world of opinion; but the opinion is false. Leucippus and Democritus point out that taste, smell, sound, color, do not yield us a true knowledge of things, but merely tell us how they affect us. In other words, no man can ever be sure of receiving an exact impression of his surroundings; and therefore the philosophies which are deduced from our surroundings must also be inexact. What, then, is this material phenomenon which we seem, in our blindness, to see, touch, hear, smell and taste? 'Matter,' as Plotinus says, 'has neither form, quality, unity, or power. It is absolute impotence and privation. It is the principle of evil. It is farthest removed from God; there is no trace of God in it. It is darkness.' Let us then seek the light."

Raising one arm above his head, Cretheus proceeded with his argument in ringing tones:

"Plotinus has shown us further that God is perfect—yet how imperfect, Thersander, is this world in which you invite me to rejoice! Did a perfect God create it? But how is that conceivable? The same philosopher has explained to us that the farther we are from the sunshine of God, the nearer we are to that darkness which is matter. But God, being light, cannot know darkness; and therefore he cannot know us as we exist in this darkness. Let us then turn our faces upward, and strive to regain his presence. But how is that to be done? Simply by not forgetting that this world, which surrounds us, is unknown to God in his perfection, and that it is to be ignored, if we are to regain Him. In short, we are like little frightened children, who in some mysterious way have lost their Father and gone far astray, and are suffering every hour from that loss. When we

regain him, we shall indeed be his beloved children again, and suffer no more forever and ever and ever."

The old black-maned lion and the beautiful young lioness, cowering against the gilded sandals of Thersander, were shedding tears.

Cretheus seemed prodigious. The hair on his head arose and surrounded his face like the turban of an Asiatic magus.

"Repent, Thersander, if you are indeed Thersander!" he shouted. "All that you think and do is false and fatal. The loves that you seek are but a grotesque and horrible counterfeit of love. The dainty nourishment that you take is a sickening parody of that nourishment which God offers you. Your pride of mind is deadly to your salvation, whereas humility would still rescue you from hell. Your defiance will end in impotent weeping. But God, who is unacquainted with revenge, will not do it to you. You will have done it to yourself."

Thersander rose, tossed away the violets, wrapped his Tyrian chlamys round him, and responded:

"Farewell. I return to a garden where the garden god extends his sceptre of earthly fertility over the yellow roses, and where Helopsychria will sing to me, in her melting voice, Sappho's ode to Aphrodite. If you listen carefully, you may be able to hear our happy laughter."

He departed, and was carried back in his litter to the wicked city.

VII

For a while Cretheus, who should have been happy, was depressed. Also, it worried him to think that, after all the pains he had taken with them, his lions had rejoiced in Laomedon, Helopsychria, and Thersander. So he resolved to purify their hearts, no matter at what cost.

He began by forbidding them, once more, to leave the cave at night.

As he knew that they had been deceiving him in this, Cretheus now made

his bed every night in the mouth of the cavern, in order to bar their way out. He no longer slept at all. At first, the lions and the lioness would come creeping toward him very stealthily to see if he was asleep; but in the darkness the green glare of their eyes invariably betrayed them. Then Cretheus would sit up, and talk to them reasonably.

The lions and the lioness retreated backward, with groans of misery. In their sorrow, they licked one another's ears, and huddled close together, meditating, no doubt, on the deliciousness of warm blood and quivering flesh. They grew thinner and thinner. Their hair fell out in patches; the vertebrae of their tails resembled a succession of knots. They lay all day in a stupor.

But Cretheus suffered with them. The weaker the lions became, the weaker he became; and he could gauge their sufferings by his own. Now and then there passed over him a flood of despair, as if, in depriving them of their former activities, he were depriving himself. However, he maintained his determination to purify the lions of their lusts.

One morning, the old black-maned lion, which was now little more than a skeleton, quietly lay over on his side, and gave up his life. At noon, the young, yellow-maned lion, which formerly had been so strong and frisky, also died. The beautiful lioness did not die till evening. While she was passing, Cretheus held her poor, lean head on his lap. With her last breath of life, she bit him feebly on the hand. Then her flat body, which had been so lithe and fair, slowly stiffened forever.

The following day Cretheus buried them.

He himself was now so weak that he could hardly drag their diminished bodies down to the desert. It took him many

hours under the hot sun to dig their graves with his hands. As he covered each one with sand, it seemed to him that he was covering forever a dear part of himself. Very feeble, he returned to the empty cave.

"My lions are gone," he sobbed.

He believed he could hear the rumor of his city—the cymbals clashing in the temples, the roar of the audience in the theatre, the rattle of chariots, the sighing of cypresses in the garden of his palace, the voice of Helopsychria singing to Thersander.

Indeed, for a moment the whole activity of the world that he was leaving seemed audible to Cretheus—the clangor everywhere accompanying the progress of conquerors; the vocal diapason raised to the gods that manifested all the impulses of nature; the rippling gaiety of waves, and branches, and young human throats distended by laughter; the universal murmur hovering above the multitude of lovers whose lips had been united, above the flowers that were receiving the wandering pollen, and the crystals of the rocks that were clinging to each other in a subtle fruition.

Then, as he lay expiring in the mouth of the cavern, before him, on the stony platform, there stood three apparitions, as it were, of Ares, Aphrodite, and Dionysus, taller than mortals, blinding in beauty, superbly pensive. It seemed to Cretheus that they spoke to one another.

"What is this strange idea that has come into our world?"

"A tiny point of corruption."

"And if it should infect all life?"

"But observe that this creature, in order truly to avoid us, has to die."

In fact, at that moment, Cretheus triumphantly breathed his last.

THE JOHN BROWN MYTH

BY LELAND H. JENKS

JOHN BROWN is one of the many characters in our history whose renown bulks vastly larger than his accomplishment. The deeds by which he achieved immortality were actually very few, and often far from creditable. He was the leader of a Kansas robber band which called out five pro-slavery neighbors in the middle of the night of May 23, 1856, murdered them and made off with their horses. A few days later, having traded the horses for others, faster and less incriminatory, Brown turned on a posse of pursuers, defeated them, and held them prisoners until overpowered by a detachment of United States cavalry. Two or three months later he and his followers, overhauled by a force of Missouri "border ruffians" who sought revenge for the murders, lost the fruits of their Summer's altruistic labor for Free Soil—a large string of horses, two hundred and fifty head of cattle and much miscellaneous merchandise. Two years later Brown led a raid from Kansas into Missouri, stole eleven Negro slaves from several plantations, and seized ten head of horses, three yoke of oxen, eleven mules, bedding, clothing, provisions, "in short, all the loot available and portable." He took the Negroes to Canada, where they were put to work, and sold the swag to pay the expenses of the trip.

On October 16, 1859, with about twenty men, Brown took possession of Harper's Ferry, a government arsenal at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, and held it for thirty-six hours. He declared that his intention was to arouse a general insurrection of Negro

slaves, with arson and rapine to follow throughout the South. The property of slave owners was to be confiscated for the benefit of the insurrectionists and their leaders. For arming the untrained Negroes he had provided, with characteristic sagacity, a thousand pikes. But he had neglected to make the slaves aware of his purpose; the pikes were not in their possession; they did not rally to his standard. After a sharp struggle, his party surrendered to Colonel Robert E. Lee of the United States Army and its members were indicted for high treason against the State of Virginia. Brown and six associates were found guilty and hanged.

Such, in brief is the story of John Brown. As a horse-thief, it must be confessed, his operations were not extensive; they did not attract much attention in eastern Kansas. Even as a murderer he was far from industrious, as industry went in those days; he did not shoot at sight all the pro-slavery men that he met, though he had sworn eternal war upon them. As a leader of citizen volunteers, he was always far from the scene when his services were desired. And as the hero of a servile insurrection, the last of his occupations in the public eye, he does not merit the remotest comparison with Spartacus, Jack Cade and Toussaint l'Ouverture.

Yet, like many other Americans of mediocre talent, Brown has come to enjoy a posthumous fame that is grossly disproportionate to his actual acts, and often at variance with them. So wide, indeed, is the disparity between what he did and what he is venerated for that it may be fairly argued that the Brown of American

legend is not the real Brown at all, but merely the hypostasis of an idea, the personification of that remote ideal which the Nineteenth Century called Liberty. Liberty had a great deal to do with public events in mid-century Europe and America. Whether they were hard-swearing, property-loving Americans who thought they had it, or desperate Continental revolutionaries who were out to get it, most men prized it highly. And about their cult there grew a myth-epic which told of the adventures of their hero-goddess—the metamorphoses by which Liberty became incarnate in the flesh and as hero activated history, real and imaginary.

The John Brown of legend developed as the American projection of this myth. We shall not soon forget its glamour in our childhood. Liberty, become manifest as Brown, wrestled with the dragons of slavery, slew many, and finally went to the gallows. Who shall say the American lacks creative imagination? A folk-mind which can evolve such a myth has the genuine gift. But there is no point today in concealing the real Brown from a generation so talented that it believes Liberty has come to life again in the garb of a revenue officer. And fortunately the Emersons and Stearnses and Higginsons and Sanborns in whose imaginations John Brown took on the proportions of a demi-god—fortunately, these myth-makers diligently accumulated documents from which the real Brown may be disinterred.

II

The Brown of the legend was a man of austere character, abstemious habits, ascetic mode of life. The asceticism of the real Brown did not interrupt his begetting of twenty children by two wives. Nor did his austerity prevent him breeding horses for the track and racing for money. Nor did his abstemiousness compel him to shun the best hotels upon his travels, or to abhor good mutton. He manufactured wine and consumed it. The sole basis for

the notion of his frugality seems to be the fact that he had a sensitive digestion, to which butter and cheese were repugnant.

Imagination, seizing Mr. Oswald Garrison Villard, portrays Brown as a "self-denying Roundhead, . . . an armored searcher for the Grail. . . . He killed not to kill, but to free. . . . His motives were wholly unselfish. . . . His aims were none other than the freeing of a race." Fact, through George B. Gill, an intimate of Brown who had nothing to gain from belittling him, admonishes us that "he was very human . . . , very superstitious, very selfish, and very intolerant, with great self-esteem; . . . essentially vindictive in nature." Brown, in truth, was a Roundhead with doubts about the Bible, who was not clear whether the Providence which guided his hand was his Maker or the devil. His company of devout crusaders, sons included, were mostly hearty agnostics.

The mythical Brown was a man of inflexible determination, who early formed a purpose from which he never swerved and to whose accomplishment he marched straightforwardly. The Brown of fact had a good deal of temperament in his make-up. He changed his mind as frequently as he did his occupation and place of residence. He was farmer, tanner, surveyor, canal contractor, stock raiser, wool merchant, horse thief and professional mendicant. During most of his life, like most men with whom he did business, he was critical of slavery. Nevertheless, after his first bankruptcy in 1841, he laid plans to operate a plantation in Virginia.

The legendary Brown was a man of ruthless methods, ready to seize every advantage, override every law, that he might achieve his lofty ends. The historical Brown showed a remarkable sensitivity to opinion. As a business man he was careless of money but full of scruples. His firm and the wool growers he represented at Springfield, Massachusetts, in the forties were sacrificed to his inability or unwillingness to beat the manufacturers in

the game of price-fixing. Brown himself ascribed his failure at Harper's Ferry to his weakness and irresolution.

The Brown of the legend was a stern realist in a world of political unrealities; he was the man of action in a movement of ineffectual dreamers; he stood in intimate contact with facts which public men of his day were seeking to shun or overlook. But the true John Brown, fancier of horse-flesh, had very little acquaintance with facts. He strove by every means to gloss them over. He deliberately accepted his legendary self as real, and foisted the imposition upon credulous Boston. He lied to his wife. He lied to his sons. He lied to the court in that speech in his own defense which eulogists have likened to Socrates' apology. The documents cannot be distorted. One doubts, indeed, that Brown knew fact from fiction, truth from falsehood, actuality from hallucination. Legend tells of an heroic fanatic, martyred in the cause of freedom; history recalls an unsuccessful business man of middle age turned adventurer.

III

The Brown of legend entered a Kansas which was the battleground of the forces favoring and opposing the extension of slavery. The latter, in the main, were pacific, and disposed to pursue their object by conciliation and compromise. They were on the verge of being overcome by their pro-slavery Missouri neighbors. The mythical Brown came upon this scene at a critical moment. His arrival, full of bellicosity, brought him at once to the leadership of the Free Soil forces, and his execution of pro-slavery men on the Pottawatomie struck terror into the border raiders. Thanks chiefly to his vigilance and that of his sons, the cause of Free Soil was triumphant, and Kansas was saved. This is the Brown whose effigy a grateful Legislature has caused to be shrined in the Hall of Atrocities at Washington as one of the two greatest Kansans.

The real Brown came to Kansas in the Autumn of 1855, a stock-raiser and wool-dealer landed, by successive failures, upon the rocks; a man aged fifty-five whose wife and family were dependent upon the patronage of Gerrit Smith, a wealthy New York Abolitionist. Leaving his family upon a portion of the Smith estate in the Adirondacks which was being turned into a Negro farm colony, Brown came to Kansas "to see if something would not turn up to his advantage." He financed the journey by taking up collections "for the cause of Kansas." He arrived in Osawatomie with sixty cents in his pocket, and got employment helping one of his sons, who had preceded him, to build a house. Two months later he led a small band to the defense of Lawrence, which was threatened by a Missouri "army." Upon this occasion a Free Soil victory was won by diplomacy and rum, and Brown did not contribute to the decision. The Winter was hard. Brown was obliged to sell his horse and wagon to buy food. He disbanded his company of "Liberty Rifles," and made plans to gain a living by stealing horses under the pretence of pursuing free-lance activities in the Free Soil cause. An ordinary horse sold for more than a month's earnings at day labor.

An incursion of the Missourians in May, 1856, gave this real Brown the opportunity to commence business. He began by robbing his neighbors at Dutch Henry's Crossing on Pottawatomie Creek; he then had them murdered to distract attention from the more vulgar crime. The assassinations did not frighten the champions of slavery; they provoked retaliation. They brought border raids and atrocities for the first time into a section of Kansas which had previously been spared. In the consequent confusion Brown found a good many things turning up to his advantage. His biographers draw a friendly veil over his activities during this most critical period in the Kansas war. While battles were lost and won Brown's new profession

engaged his time, and to his considerable profit. By August he was able to send his sons, a half dozen of them, sick and faint-hearted and tired of the business, back to the Adirondacks. And he had a four-mule team and money in his pocket.

Here is a sample of Brown's work which is well-attested by documents. Arriving in Osawatimie with the team toward the end of August, within four days he collected, equipped and mounted upon stolen horses a company of ten men, including himself. In two days more he effected a consolidation with two other companies of "jayhawkers," as they termed themselves, and within three more he had gathered two hundred and fifty head of cattle, beside horses and other plunder, and assembled the whole for rendezvous at Osawatimie. There he was caught by a pro-slavery raid in force. Brown gave battle, and fame labels him John Brown of Osawatimie in consequence. But neither here nor upon any other occasion did he strike any "blow for freedom" which actually helped the Free Soil party. Brown, in those days, fought only when it was to his professional interest to do so—only when there was something in it for Brown.

Nevertheless there grew up a Brown saga along the border, which gradually spread to the East. James Redpath, a newspaper correspondent eager for copy, who had come to Kansas confessedly to foment civil war, found Brown in hiding on Ottawa creek soon after he commenced his marauding career. It was no strain on the imagination of a good reporter to turn the outlaw into a David hiding from Saul, a Wallace eluding Edward I. Redpath saw or affected to see in Brown's activities the correct and laudable alternative to the pusillanimous policy of the Free Soil politicians and land speculators. And so his facile pen diligently drew for the delectation of the East the picture of Old Brown, Brown the hero, Brown the indomitable warden of the Kansas marches, Brown the avenger, Brown who had

visions from Almighty God and marched to the execution of divine decrees!

Over the border General Atchison and the pro-slavery journalists soon began embroidering the legend. It is written that Satan, who certainly should have known better, "believed—and trembled." Southern publicists began to believe profoundly in Old Brown, though at first they did not tremble. They strove resolutely to impose upon their constituents and upon national opinion the identity of the Brown myth with the rising Republican party. Atrocities were multiplied from one end of the border to the other and laid at the door of a half-imaginary Brown and his omnipresent band of nigger-loving cutthroats. This was the sort of thing, voters were assured, which might be expected upon a large scale should the Republicans win the national election.

The Republicans won Congress, but not the Presidency. A new governor appeared in Kansas who quickly patched up peace in the border war. Control of their political affairs seemed assured for the time to the majority of Free Soil settlers, and opportunity for plausible jayhawking was at an end. Forced to find a fresh source of income for his numerous family, Brown now decided to capitalize the Brown legend and to sell stock to gullible New England. Committees all over the East had been raising funds to assist emigrants to Kansas, giving them supplies, relieving their destitution. Brown proposed to solicit funds from these committees upon his own account as the arch-hero of the Kansas war. Thus he became committed to the perpetuation of Old Brown.

IV

In lectures delivered after the raid on Harper's Ferry, Ralph Waldo Emerson thus recorded his impressions of a person he had once met at the house of Thoreau, the eminent anarchist:

Brown is so transparent that all men see him through. He is a man to make friends wherever

on earth courage and integrity are esteemed—the rarest of heroes, a pure idealist, with no by-ends of his own. Many of us have seen him, and every one who has heard him speak has been impressed alike by his simple, artless goodness and his sublime courage. . . .

He grew up a religious and manly person, in severe poverty; a fair specimen of the best stock of New England, having the force of thought and that sense of right which are the warp and woof of greatness. . . . Thus was formed a romantic character, absolutely without any vulgar trait; living to ideal ends, without any mixture of self-indulgence or compromise . . . abstemious, refusing luxuries . . . quiet and gentle as a child in the house.

It is clear that Emerson was not talking about John Brown, the bankrupt wool-dealer and horse-thief. He had simply encountered a Politics Myth. If pressed, the transcendental radical would probably have admitted that no man was ever actually like that outside the pages of Walter Scott. But he was not alone in confusing Brown with a day-dream. A large circle of men in Boston and Concord found in the personality which they accredited to Brown a lodestone for their seditious yearnings, an idol to which they could dedicate their political passion. The "best people" of Concord listened to his words, wrote Alcott. "Emerson, Thoreau, Judge Hoar, my wife, and some of them contribute something in aid of his plans without asking particulars, such confidence does he inspire in his integrities and abilities." Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Samuel Howe, who invented the sewing-machine, the sweat-shop and philanthropy, and Theodore Parker, a pulpit orator with an obsession for blood, were among the amateurs of *haute politique* whom Brown met. And these men, with George Luther Stearns, a successful lead-pipe manufacturer, F. B. Sanborn, a young schoolmaster fresh from Harvard, and Gerrit Smith, already Brown's patron, became a sort of board of directors to back his enterprises, as yet unrevealed. Radical Abolitionists all, imbued with Garrison's anarchism though not with his inclination toward non-resistance, they found that Brown's hypothetical career fitted precisely into their notion of what the

career of a master politician should be.

It matters not the medium who evoked the ectoplasmic Brown, whether Brown himself or accessories. The seance was one of true believers. The credulity which he plays upon is enough, soon or late, to shake the sanity of any charlatan. The priests of Delphi, in the end, heeded the oracle. John Brown very easily came to believe that he was a hero. But he did not forget that his family on the Adirondack farm needed a frequent draft.

V

Brown's biographers compute his takings from the first New England campaign at twenty-three thousand dollars. Of this amount thirteen thousand came in the form of military supplies, rifles, revolvers, clothing, ammunition, mostly the property of the Massachusetts Kansas Committee deposited in Iowa and placed at Brown's disposal for use in Kansas. Seven thousand dollars were in the form of a letter of credit upon G. L. Stearns, to be used in equipping a company in Kansas. One thousand Brown wormed out of his patrons directly to buy a farm for his family in the Adirondacks. Thus it appears that the funds which he procured for immediate expenditure were not very large. In those days Yankee money-bags were not handed about recklessly, even to a Vision. The believers wanted action. They wanted Brown to go back to Kansas to stiffen the settlers' backbones. Reluctantly he departed to undertake the job. He was expected to raise a company at once, and do something dramatic to rescue bleeding Kansas from the harlot of slavery.

The harlot was actually frustrated—but Brown was not there. His rifles, his funds and his noble character did not contribute to the solution of the Kansas question in 1857. There are letters extant from the commander of the volunteer Free Soil forces begging Brown to bring on his weapons, but his unquenchable hatred of slavery did not stir him from his snug board-

ing-house in Tabor, Iowa, even when \$150 cash was forwarded to him by the struggling Kansans. Brown the jayhawker, Brown the dauntless, Brown who acknowledged no master on earth, Brown who had a drawing account of seven thousand dollars, complained that he could not pay his board bill. Was this Brown a scoundrel or was he only a fool?

At any rate, it was while he was at Tabor that his correspondence began to give the first definite suggestion of the Virginia adventure. Its genesis and early development cannot be traced; it is possible that it originated while he was still in Boston, from some chance speculation of the fertile Parker. His friends, when they got the first news of the project, gathered the impression that Brown intended to raid the Southern plantations and run off with as many slaves as possible, to make slave property seem precarious. But this sort of enterprise required a zone of lawlessness from which to operate. Disorder alone could make it possible, not to speak of making it profitable to the promoters. Brown had a family to think of. And so, without revealing to anyone, possibly without fully realizing himself, all the implications of his venture, he planned his servile insurrection.

It is unnecessary to rehearse all his misadventures during the two years which separated the inception of the project and its performance. May, 1858, was the time first set for the raid. Brown's men, by this time, were enthusiastic. A convention at Chatham, Canada, enveloped the scheme in that curious ritualistic atmosphere which Americans love to wrap about their politics. The directors had held a special session with Gerrit Smith in the chair, and the financial arrangements were complete. Stearns had foreclosed a mortgage upon the rifles for Kansas, and they were now available for use where Brown wanted them. But then one of the Brown lieutenants gave the thing away, seeking black-mail, and the terrified directors ordered a postponement.

Brown now took his disappointed followers to Kansas for a season, assumed a new name, found a section of the border which was just far enough from being pacified to shelter him, and resumed his horse-stealing. This employment kept them all in funds until an opportunity for a renewal of the Virginia project made it possible to call upon the Boston backers for more working capital.

VI

The raid upon Harper's Ferry may be set down as the most considerable failure of a man whose career had exhibited little else. If any rudiment of caution or foresight might have been exercised, Brown gave no sign that he knew of it, although he puttered around in the vicinity of the Ferry an entire Summer getting the business in order. When the time came to move he left books, papers, documents intact at his rendezvous, where they easily fell into the hands of the law. He moved upon a position from which there was no retreat, and in which, when it was taken, no defense could be offered, even by a considerable force. And the point upon which the success of the whole enterprise depended, the rising of the slaves, Brown left wholly to chance.

Yet he was not crazy. The raid was no sudden aberration of a fanatic. More than a hundred people had been acquainted for months with one or another aspect of the undertaking, and had countenanced it. It was just such an act as heroes of political myths perform and in success or failure vindicate their heroism. It represented the dramatic moment that a man who becomes legend must achieve. Lincoln was shot. Roosevelt went to Africa. Wilson collapsed. Brown's enterprise was one for which he had every resource but one—capacity. His imagination could conceive the plan. His judgment could recognize the practicability and advantages of it if ably executed. But his talents were simply not up to the job.

A month in Charleston jail and the sight of the gallows brought him such efficiency as a provider for his family as he had never shown before. Loving hands have preserved the letters in which he set forth to the sympathetic the sad fate of his destitute wife and children. His board of directors were in flight pell-mell to Canada or sighing their relief in Europe. They needed only a correspondence in an heroic vein, a suggestion of martyred fortitude, to reassure them that Brown was indeed the hero of their imaginings, and so their terrified purse-strings were opened with a great generosity. The letters from prison breathed piety and devotion. Overcoming his old doubts, Brown indited long justifications of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. In compensation for his mundane failure, the inevitable triumph of the supernatural moral order became increasingly clear to his eyes. Recalling his sins, he grew more and more convinced of

the merciful goodness of God. And recovering from the confusion in which he had blurted out the truth about his plans at Harper's Ferry, he delivered a speech declaring that he had intended only to free the slaves. "I never did intend to incite murder, or treason, or the destruction of property, or to excite or incite the slaves to rebellion, or to make insurrection." Brown was fast slipping into myth even in his own consciousness. And when he came to write his will, he forgot his debts entirely.

Emerson composed a lecture. Numbers of Miltons in Boston and vicinity, inglorious but unfortunately not mute, composed what they termed poems. Pulpit orators, as they returned from flight, delivered eulogies. And soon a hundred thousand men were singing

And his soul goes marching on!

But it was not the soul of any John Brown that really ever lived.

CHAUTAUQUA: ITS TECHNIC

BY GREGORY MASON

“**W**HAT will you have?” asked the tall, sallow waitress in the Fundamentalist “eating place.”

“Is your service *à la carte* or *table d’hôte*?” I asked cheerfully.

The waitress looked puzzled, then hurt.

“We serve a regular dinner for forty cents,” she said sharply, and patted the masses of hair which hid her ears.

The thin young man across the table chuckled.

“Gwendolyn don’t get your French,” he observed, smiling at her with the restrained condescension of one who knows his own superiority but tries hard to hide it.

“You shet up, Perfesser,” retorted Gwendolyn. “You never got no nearer to French culchoor yourself than last night at the Chautauqua when you heard the band play the Mayonnaise.”

The Perfesser roared, and winked at me. Gwendolyn moved off majestically to get the “regular dinner.” She was immensely pleased with having put the Perfesser in his place.

A moment later that gentleman confided to me that he was the local Superintendent of Schools. He ate here occasionally, he said, as a relief from the monotony of his boarding-house. Between large bites of canned pork and beans he discussed the insoluble problems of the day. War had just blazed out in Europe. Most of America was amazed, mildly indignant that such a thing could happen in the Twentieth Century. The Perfesser reflected this frame of mind.

“It’s a shame,” he declared, “that those big nations of Europe have to fight as if

they were Mexicans. Why can’t they live side by side like America and Canada have done for a hundred years, perfectly *em-bonpoint*?”

You may smile, as I did (behind my paper napkin), but that evening the waitress who had never heard of a *table d’hôte* dinner but who had heard the band play the Mayonnaise, that evening this girl and the Superintendent of Schools who wished that France and Germany could live *em-bonpoint* (“ongbongpong,” he pronounced it) were both in the audience at the town Chautauqua to hear a lecture on “The Burning Issue of Alsace-Lorraine.”

I might have known that I was in a good Chautauqua town. The prevalence of toothpicks was a hint. The canned food at that “eating place” in a region conspicuous for its fertile farms was another. The popularity of soggy pie and chicoried coffee was a third. The difficulty of getting a glass of fresh milk was a fourth. But best of all was the complete absence of olive oil. Some day a sociologist may explain to the world the connection between civilization and the use of olive oil. Count upon it, if ever you find yourself in a region of husbandmen where the town’s hotel offers canned vegetables in Summer, if ever you stumble into a land of dairies whose inhabitants take their “cup o’ cawfee” with condensed milk, above all, if fate ever leads you to where the rare (oh, very rare!) offering of fresh greens is seasoned with vinegar and sugar in place of olive oil, then, indeed *then*, you may know you are in the chosen pastures of Chautauqua.

Let figures tell the tale. Annually Chau-

tauqua carries its Message (mark the word) to some ten thousand hamlets of this great, brave land. Annually the attendance is about thirty-five million. Here, obviously, is a luscious opportunity for him who desires to gain the approbation, the esteem, the support and admiration of the multitude. No demagogue, no crank with a nostrum to sell, can afford to overlook the audience in the brown tent. Hark, now, to the testimony of the most eminent demagogue of our generation. The Honorable William Jennings Bryan is speaking:

I know of no better audience than the Chautauqua audience . . . These meetings enable me to keep in touch with the People. I know of no better opportunity than they offer to present a Message worth presenting to those to whom it is worth while to present a Message.

Note that last sentence. It is in the true style of Chautauqua.

II

Now supposing that, like the Nebraska Medicine Man, one is eager to interest and inflame the plain people: how does one go about winning them? A clue may be found in the definition of Chautauqua bequeathed to us by Bishop John H. Vincent, the eminent Methodist *arriero* who founded the original annual roundup at Chautauqua Lake, N. Y.:

Self improvement in all our faculties, for us all, through all time, for the greatest good of all people—this is the Chautauqua idea, a divine idea, a democratic idea, a people's idea, a progressive idea, a millennial idea.

What is here? Again the word-intoxicated, apothegmatic style of Chautauqua, but what else? Can't you detect beneath it the profound earnestness of tone? There, indeed you have it; there is our first pointer. Even though you be a Tyrolean yodler or a "polyphonic imitator," do not step out on the flimsy stage of the big tent unless you feel or can skilfully pretend to feel the sober purposefulness of human life. Even the telepathists and magicians pause in their rites to allude to the great

lecturer who is to follow with his "inspiring elucidation of world problems." In brief, it is the fundamental assumption of Chautauqua that life is real, life is earnest, and that entertainment is distinctly secondary to instruction and edification. The lecturer must be more than merely informative or entertaining; he must also have a Message. The messianic delusion of the lecturer, plus the self-improvement complex of the audience—there is your Chautauqua equation.

One more proverb of the Methodist Fathers of Chautauqua is worth quoting: "Change of occupation, not idleness, is true recreation." There again you have the necessity of being *serious*. The gossoons who crowd the big tents have never entertained Stevenson's suggestion that the Differential Calculus and Hearing The Band Play In The Gardens are equally important chapters in the Book of Life. They have not heeded Masfield's remark that anything which makes men and women happy together, such as fox hunting, creates a permanent beauty. In fact, they have never heard of Masfield, and they are not consciously aware of such a thing as beauty. Bred in their bones is the Puritan instinct that Fun and Sin are two names for the same Devil. Hearing The Band Play In The Gardens is Fun, *i. e.*, Sin, whereas it is Change of Occupation, *i. e.*, Self Improvement, to sit on an unplanned board and hearken to Bryan.

Of course, the things that are serious are definitely categorized in Puritania. The gaudy dreams of such daring scientists as Lothrop Stoddard and Madison Grant are serious; good novels and good poetry are not. But Holy Writ, of course, is the most serious thing of all, and an ability to quote it copiously has enabled many a dull but deserving pastor or pedagogue to eke out the pittance of his profession with a goodly two or three hundred a week while the Summer circuits are open.

Be serious, then, is the first rule. But the second rule is, *Be not too serious*. Don't count on much capacity for sustained

thinking. Remember, your audience ranges in age from nine weeks to ninety years. Remember, experience has proved that the most successful method of delivery on all the great circuits imitates that of a machine gun. Bear in mind the sad experiences of some of our masters of after-dinner rhetoric, such as John Temple Graves and Irvin Cobb, when they tried their slow-reloading, Big Bertha style in the tent. Take to heart the advice of that sage magnate of the canvas circuits who says:

Talk so fast they won't have time to think. For if they think at all it will not be about your words but about that pinochle game waiting in the back of the corner store or about that keg of hooch working under the cellar stairs.

Obviously, to maintain for an hour and a quarter a vocal imitation of the bark of the *mitrailleuse* is no slight strain on the vital parts. The platform is no place for a weakling.

III

From end to end of the Chautauqua belt there prevail certain widespread prejudices and *mores* which our young Machiavelli, "desirous of interesting and inflaming mobs," would do well to acquaint himself with in advance. He must heed these prejudices if he would gain access to the ear and purse of multitudes. The most staccato delivery, the strongest lungs and the most polished manner will avail him nothing if in the eyes of the local committees he does not demean himself, on *and off* the platform, like a "Christian and a moral gentleman." First of all, this means that whenever he speaks on the Sabbath, he will scrap his regular discourse for an amateur sermon or at least interlard his usual address with a few Golden Texts. Secondly, it means that if he values his weekly pay-check he will never permit himself to be familiar with the favors of the other sex, or with the juice that stimulates, or with dancing or cards. More than one good lecturer is now spending his Summers raking hay or tutoring

morons because he allowed a zealous committeeman to catch him in a dance hall or poolroom or at a game of casino. Let the word go through the underground channels of the righteous that so-and-so is a card player, and so-and-so's contract will be worth less than a busted flush. To the Baptist-Methodist-Presbyterian *bloc* which runs Chautauqua (and the United States) four of a kind are almost as horrifying as the eternal triangle.

Once, at a dismal railroad junction in Nebraska, a fellow Chautauquan and I, desperate at the prospect of a two hours' wait for our train, asked a citizen if he could direct us to a poolroom. The burgher drew back as if we had struck him.

"Gentlemen," he roared, "we'd as soon have a saloon in this town as a poolroom."

"Why not have both and be a real town?" I asked experimentally, but not a glimmer of a smile crossed that austere face, and our friend took himself off, as from a pair of lepers. Fortunately, I was not to lecture in this town, and fortunately my season was nearly ended. But the word did spread and at my remaining engagements on the circuit there were noticeably hostile faces in every audience.

Let the aspirant never forget that the Chautauquas are run by godly men. Even though he is booked to speak in a notoriously wide-open mining town, it is safe to assume that his appearance has been arranged by the minority of the pure, and probably, indeed, as pious propaganda against the heathen. Hide your spots as never before, for that evening you are to be the "sword of righteousness!"

So vital is this matter of private morals that the managers of the larger Chautauqua booking bureaus are wont to send form letters to their "talent," warning them to avoid as the pestilence anything falling within the bucolic definition of immorality. Official sanction for this attitude is given by the adoption of a uniform contract by the Chautauqua Managers' Association, stipulating that a lecturer's contract may be broken at the manager's will if the

lecturer "conducts himself improperly," *i. e.*, in violation of agricultural *mores*.

IV

The Chautauqua movement, indeed, is a crusade against the Devil, and it shows all the intolerance of other crusades. A veteran of the tents, Dr. William S. Sadler, in addressing the last annual convention of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association, made the fact quite plain. He was trying to "impress the young generation of Chautauquans with the seriousness—may I even say, sacredness?—of their calling," and he declared that "lack of moral character and ethical standing may not always seriously handicap an actress, entertainer or musician on the American stage today, but such a lack of moral worth is, and I believe always will be, sufficient cause for disbarment from the platform of the American Chautauqua."

In such an environment one would not expect to find much regard for that mythical American institution, free speech, and one does not, in fact, find it. Mr. Paul M. Pearson, in his presidential address to the last convention of the International Lyceum and Chautauqua Association, said:

The pressure which is brought to bear on the system manager to allow nothing said from the platform which will be criticized by prominent persons in the community (most of whom are conservatives) is a great source of danger to the entire movement. . . . In my opinion, the criticism that we have too many "safe and sane" lectures is the most searching, the fairest and the truest criticism that is to be made against us.

Most successful lecturers, like most successful editorial writers, carefully try to cut their cloth both ways. In discussing so dangerous a topic as American relations with Europe at a time when a presidential campaign is on, one may be pardoned for a glow of pride if, after the lecture, one is complimented by different auditors both for one's "clear revelation of the knavery of Wilson's policy" and one's "brave appreciation of the splendid work of President Wilson." Such an experience was

mine. On a later tour, the remnant of my conscience being sickened by this sort of straddling, I ventured to hint at a few personal convictions. One was that in view of the complexity of our population and the different social philosophies entertained in Nordic-Puritan Berea, Ohio, and Italian-Slavic Bridgeport, Connecticut, it might not be unwise to consider some modification of the Volstead Act. This neglect of the managerial admonition to be discreet created an uproar. One manager screamed that my *faux pas* had cost him much business, "in spite of the fact I made a special effort to go out there and apologize for what you had said on the liquor question."

I have preserved an interesting souvenir of this rash adventure. It is an official report on my Satanic work written on the bill head of a coal dealer, the chairman of the local committee. His counts were as follows (the italics are his own):

1. Audience not satisfied.
2. Admission 60 cents.
3. Weather good.
4. Not a strong speaker, deep thinker or instructive entertainer.
5. *His attitude on the liquor question very unpopular with our audience.*

It is always useful to commune with other lecturers who have spoken in towns where you are booked to go. Lecturers as well as hoboes have their fraternal, secret communications, and unfair practises, such as that, for instance of the Indianapolis Y. M. C. A., are soon known throughout the tribe. This Y. M. C. A. is famous for the censorship its officers apply to the men and women invited to its rostrum. Such speakers, of course, are booked several months in advance. But instead of finding out their religious views before booking them, it has been the custom of the Indianapolis Y. M. C. A. to send to each engaged lecturer, only a few days in advance of his scheduled appearance, a questionnaire intended to reveal whether or not he has a clean theological bill of health. Only a member of a Protestant church of the more evangelical type could honestly answer

the questions in the affirmative. But if the speaker does not so answer them his lecture is apt to be canceled at the eleventh hour. A truly pious procedure!

I presume that it was owing to the illness of the energetic purifier who was secretary of that "Y" that I did not receive the usual questionnaire. When I reached the hall the acting-chairman asked me to omit the last part of my scheduled oration in order to exhort the audience of men to accept the Jahveh of the Old Testament. When I declined, protesting my conscientious doubts and pleading that all my advertising had shown my lecture to be non-sectarian, the chairman was furious and wanted to cancel the engagement. But, the hall being already filled, he confined himself to praying aloud for my pagan soul.

In return, I fear, every itinerant spouter prays nightly for the decease of all committee chairmen and professional introducers. There are a few who know how to combine felicity with brevity, but they are as rare as Baptists who prefer Beethoven to Irving Berlin. Painfully common are such bunglers as the Chautauqua Superintendent who introduced me in place of Colonel John Temple Graves.

"Folks," he drawled, "we were to have heard the message tonight of Colonel John Temple Graves, a man who, while a dwarf physically, is a giant intellectually. But there has been a last minute change and we are to have the pleasure of hearing Doctor Mason, a man who is a giant physically and . . . and . . . and . . ."

Someone tittered and I laughed. The Superintendent waved at me, muttered something incoherent, and fled.

V

Chautauqua audiences, by the way, are never men and women. They are rarely ladies and gentlemen, or even people. Nearly always they are folks. How that rustic term comes to grate on the ear of a veteran wanderer in the alfalfa! Nevertheless, not

to use it freely is to handicap oneself as deliberately as if one put on a wrist watch or an Oxford accent.

These little things are half the battle—these little tricks which win the sympathy of your audience at the outset. Bryan is a master to be studied carefully by anyone who would be a Demosthenes of the steppes. When he issues from the wings he manages somehow to intensify the smugly pained lines in his face, the creases in his flapping and shiny habiliments. This suggests the noble suffering of one never far from Calvary, and the indifference to personal trivia expected in one who is a Bearer of Others' Burdens. When speaking on a hot day, he rubs one hand over a cake of ice on a table beside him, and clasps its frigorific palm over the opposite wrist. You or I would see in this simply a man sensibly trying to keep cool. But the Chautauqua fan sees a great Hero, a Folk-God, subject to noble but wasting emotions, who husbands his strength through no motive so selfish as personal comfort, but only to Serve Others by the delivery in entirety of his Saviour-like Message.

It will be a prodigious help on the circuit if, by cosmetics or otherwise, you can manage to achieve a death-mask pallor below eyes filled with tired kindness. When you reach the town of your engagement do not be seen eating, smoking or enjoying life, but preserve a mysterious retirement in your hotel room. Then, if time tables or fictitious obstacles of travel will bear it out, have your introducer allude to how "the speaker of the evening, forgetful of the gnawing malady that keeps him under a doctor's care, rode all last night in terrible discomfort because of his altruistic determination that you good folks should not be disappointed by losing his Message of Inspiration." Introducers lend themselves with a voluptuous joy to this sort of bilge.

The Chautauqua mob evinces a great readiness to work for the man who is supposed to entertain it. There are performers and chairmen who have an un-

VI

canny knowledge of how to use this amiable trait. I remember a Chautauqua in an Ohio town where the "concert company" ("song-birds and bell-ringers") which was to give the afternoon program (Chautauquas have two or three programs a day), had missed its connection and could not possibly arrive until forty-five minutes after the show was to begin. The resourceful Superintendent told the crowd just what had happened. But in a subtle way he made them feel superior to the tardy minstrels, he made them feel proud that *they* were here on time. Then he proposed that they sing "America," which he led in an oily, Methodist tenor. When they had sung it through twice, he proposed that the East side of the audience sing one verse and the West side sing the second. Then he had the men sing one verse and the women another. Some of the men looked sheepish at first, some of the women giggled self-consciously, but soon all were braying lustily, and they kept it up with obvious satisfaction till the missing entertainers arrived. I don't know why grown men and women like that sort of thing, but certainly in the Corn Belt they do.

There is danger that the novice, noting some of these childish traits of the congenital Chautauquan, will begin to resort to flattery. Here, strange as it may seem, the haranguer is on seismic soil. The cosy day when Chautauqua would rise to a crude compliment is past. It has been offered so much bait of this kind that it has learned to smell it from afar. Be subtle then, if you must flatter. "I cannot go on till I have told you what a pleasure it is for me to be in an up-to-date, enterprising town like this," will not get by. Even "I hardly need point out to an intelligent audience like this"—even that tried dart is apt to ricochet. Flattery by negation still goes occasionally—cataloguing the vices which an audience has *not*. But flattery by implication is safer—ridiculing boobish audiences you have addressed or uncouth towns you have visited and hinting *pizzicato* that the present audience or town is quite different.

So much for the nature and habits of the fauna which our young Machiavelli is setting himself to interest and inflame. Now, for the nature of his own attack. He would do well to decide whether in any one hunt he will try mainly to *interest* or to *inflame*. For the fact is that the most successful practitioners incline to separate the two methods. Indeed, nearly all Chautauqua lectures today fall into one of two great classes, *i. e.*, those which are "informational" (the lectures which *interest*), and those which are "inspirational" (the lectures which *inflame*).

Formerly, nearly the whole field was filled by the inspirational lecture. But during the past decade, and particularly during the past half-decade, there has been a conspicuous development of the informational lecture. Travel talks come under this heading, of course, and so do health talks, "popular science" lectures, discourses of war correspondents, aviators and explorers, and narrations by the eminent of How I Did It and How You Can Do Likewise. The secret of the informational lecture is that it caters to the lust for self-improvement and to the desire to get something for nothing. This lust for self improvement, which is growing apace, is found nowhere in such intensity as in rural America. Does it spring in part from a hatred of environment? Certainly the most oleaginous prating about "self-betterment" is heard in states like Kansas, Nebraska (pronounce through the nose) and Ioway, all of them conspicuous for the flat dreariness of their landscape and the flatter dreariness of their souls.

The peasant afflicted with this appetite sees Chautauqua as an agency through which he can gratify his longing for almost nothing. He is "sold" the idea that by paying \$1.80 for five days of Chautauqua, he can get himself a liberal education, a whole carload of canned culture. It is cheaper than Dr. Eliot's sixty inches of printing and a darned sight easier. It

is infinitely easier than trying to think.

The secret of the inspirational lecture is even plainer. This form of hypnotic self indulgence releases the obscure religious longings which lie in every looby. More than that, it warms the undeveloped feeling for poetry which exists in him no less, although he would be the first to deny it. Speaking broadly, the Mother, Home and Heaven lecture, even today, *is* Chautauqua. If we accept that generalization, then we may say that Chautauqua is the poetry of the American peasant. Religious poetry, tribal poetry. It expresses his *mores*, his taboos, his bewilderment at the mystery of the universe, his brute aspiration toward the stars. Chautauqua voices all these feelings and at the same time soothes the clodhopper and makes him contented. It assures him that he is right in preferring Gene Stratton Porter to Joseph Conrad, Eddie Guest to Robert Frost, the *American Magazine* to the *Nation*. It assures him that when he banned Chateau Yquem he lost nothing as good as his own corn licker.

Provided that you have a strong stomach and are able, figuratively speaking, to hold your own nose while you are orating, the Mother, Home and Heaven lecture is the easiest to master—far easier than the informational type. A certain amount of industry is necessary to acquire even enough *misinformation* to fill an hour and a half, but any smart fellow with a flare for imitation who will study the more successful revivalists and Methodist pulpiteers can master the inspirational model. The patriotic note is useful here. Yokels who are resistant to flattery will follow the oriflamme to the heights.

VII

"But"—do I hear you shout?—"you have told me everything except where I am to get my *material* for lectures!"

Why, Sir, must I state in bald English that you may steal it? Yes, steal it. If you aim to be inspirational, dig up an old copy

of "Getting On In Life," or of "Self Help," by Samuel Smiles, or, if you must be more modern, buy and study the collected works of Dr. Orison Swett Marden, Dr. Frank Crane and the Rev. Newell Dwight Hillis. If, on the other hand, your aspiration is to be informational, your task is equally simple—if you remember that in this field the fashion changes more frequently. Buy the latest book of H. G. Wells, rewrite a few chapters of it, deliver it in the pompous, rhetorically interrogative manner popular with women's clubs, and you will achieve much more than local fame as "a brilliant speaker, whose thought-provoking comment on world problems is a liberal education in itself." If you find the Wells wake already overcrowded, hitch your wagon to some lesser comet, such as Madison Grant or Lothrop Stoddard. Only, if you choose one of the latter, be sure you do it in a season when the Superiority of the Nordic Blond rather than Simple Living or Rhythmic Thinking is in the ascendancy. Eighty per cent of the success of the informational speaker is due to his ability to ride the latest fad a little before the other seers of rural Rotaria.

Let your conscience be at ease. The great majority of successful Chautauqua lecturers use these very methods. The vigor and forthrightness of an original thinker would be far too strong a dose for the folks in the tent. Better than I can paint it is the picture of them limned by William James after a visit to the original organization at Chautauqua Lake, New York. Thus he described the Chautauqua atmosphere:

This order is too tame, this culture too second-rate; this goodness too uninspiring. This human drama without a villain or a pang; this community so refined that ice-cream soda-water is the utmost offering it can make to the brute animal in man; this city simmering in the tepid lake-side sun; this atrocious harmlessness of all things,—I cannot abide them. Let me take my chances again in the big outside worldly wilderness with all its sins and sufferings. There are heights and depths, the precipices and the steep ideals, the gleams of the awful and the infinite; and there is more hope and help a thousand times than in this dead level and quintessence of every mediocrity.

REFLECTIONS OF A BIBLE-READER

BY ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE

EVEN the most wordly mind would hardly deny that for centuries past the influence of the Bible has been incalculably great in establishing certain ways of thinking for the majority of men in Christian countries. The Bible is a tremendous fact. No matter whether we regard it as a bed-time story of our childhood days, or as an impressive text thundered from pulpits in the years of our prime, or as a consoling page to be studied though feeble eyes beside the flickering candle of old age, still from any point of view we must realize that the color of this venerable narrative has in some way affected most of the lives of Europe and America. But it is no easy matter to define in what manner it has affected them, or to say in what different degrees different types of men have been affected. I doubt whether enough attention has been given to this by no means irrelevant question.

One fact about the influence of the Bible is so obvious that it may be accepted as an axiom. It is this: that as the education of the individual increases, and as the scope of his reading and reflection widens, the Bible's influence upon him becomes diluted and modified by many other factors. And it is equally clear, conversely, that the simpler man, the peasant type, is likely to find in the Bible his most important and perhaps his only book. This simpler man is usually the chief concern of the religious organizations. For example, the New York Bible Society is taking pains that a copy of the Bible shall be placed in the hands of every steerage-passenger who comes through the gates of Ellis Island. A considerable proportion of these new-

comers are naïve peasants, who will soon confront with some bewilderment the unfamiliar conditions of an amazing city. The Babylonian prodigality of upper New York will flash itself before their eyes; the roar of toil and social discontent in lower New York will resound in their ears; and they will have as their guide the Bible,—perhaps an old possession of their hearts, but certainly now held actually in their hands. A strange guide! May one be permitted to doubt whether the Bible is the best of text-books for such as these?

I ask the question because it was with great astonishment that I myself, a few weeks ago, rediscovered the Bible. I am now past my fortieth year; and except for purposes of literary reference, or to re-read the exquisitely sensual Song of Solomon, I had not opened the Bible once during the preceding fifth of a century. But when one night I found myself in a bedroom of a New York hotel, alone and without books, I took up the copy of the Bible which the New York Bible Society had placed on the table beside my bed, and began to read.

I turned deliberately to the Book of Esther; for the story of Esther was one that had haunted me ever since, as a child lying in bed at nightfall, I had heard my aunt half-read, half-narrate it to me; and my clear imperishable memory of her voice and of the shadowy lamp-lit room in which she read had ever since been no more vivid to me than the picture of the great court of Ahasuerus, and the figure of the noble and gentle queen who at the risk of her own life passed in stately presence down the long hall and into the forbidden

throne-room, to demand from the king the forfeited lives of her people, the Israelites. The story had been, as I remembered it, a thing done in the grand manner, a heroic story. But that night in the New York hotel bedroom, I found that a somewhat different tale was the one actually recounted in the Bible.

The account opens with the scene of a great feast, and with Ahasuerus, monarch over India and Ethiopia, "merry with wine" on his throne. He lustfully orders "Vashti the queen" to be summoned before him, that he may "shew the people and the princes her beauty;" for, in a manner not uncommon in tyrannical men, he desires that the perfume of other men's lustful envy may be rank in his jaded nostrils. Vashti, upon receipt of the king's order, declines to come and exhibit her charms before the drunken feast. She is perhaps the one admirable figure in this extraordinary narrative; and her name should be kept always green as the name of the first feminist. But no one in that day, of course, believed that a woman might have some right to say when and where her own body should be displayed or enjoyed; therefore the wise men counseled the indignant king that her insubordination would set such an example to other wives that it might wreck civilization. So the king took their advice, and cast out Vashti—and we hear nothing more of this admirable woman.

But when Vashti was gone, the amorously inclined king was left rather at a loss; so it was necessary that "all the fair young virgins" of the land be corralled for his pleasure. Among these virgins was the Jewess Esther. Her kinsman, Mordecai, gladly let her go; for in all Eastern countries the road to preferment is considerably smoother if one has a female relative in the royal harem. Hence Mordecai, naturally eager that Esther should not lose the chance of so profitable a connection, warned her not to let anyone know that she was a Jewess; and she very carefully followed this prudent advice.

It required a year of cleaning, polishing and perfuming before a girl was considered fit for the king's bed; after these preparations were over "came every maiden unto the king" in her proper turn; "in the evening she went, and on the morrow she returned"; after that, "she came in unto the king no more, except the king delighted in her, and that she were called by name." Apparently Esther's performance in this competition was brilliantly satisfactory, for "she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head." Esther had won. And naturally she still complacently pretended that she was not a Jewess; and the prudent Mordecai still kept careful watch outside the palace gates.

So much for the preliminaries,—this typical recital of the corrupt and servile intrigues that surround the harem of every Eastern potentate. It was the end that astonished me. I had remembered, from early childhood, how Ahasuerus rashly accepts the proposal of his chief counselor, Nathan, who is a Jew-hater, when Nathan offers to pay ten thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury in return for the satisfaction of being allowed to massacre all the Jews in the realm. But then comes the crisis of the story, much different from what I had remembered. Mordecai, wailing, beseeches Esther the queen to save her people, the Jews, by entreating the king's mercy for them. Esther replies that it is almost certain death for anyone to go to the king uninvited, and she declines to intercede at any such risk. Being a perfectly sensible oriental business-woman, whose only stock in trade is her body, she is not going to take any chances of having that body decapitated. But Mordecai, rising to the full stature of his nature, says to Esther: "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews." And then Esther sees that this is indeed no laughing matter; her own skin is in danger; and since, as Mordecai has convincingly pointed out, she is sure to be killed along with the

other Jews if she remains inactive, she decides on a course of action. She invites the king to a beautiful "banquet of wine," and "finds favor in his sight," and eventually wheedles the silly old potentate into changing his mind about the destruction of the Jews. Thus Esther saves her race and herself, and Mordecai gets a fat appointment at court. Indeed, so prosperous does Mordecai become that he is finally strong enough to encourage the Jews to turn the tables, so that instead of being massacred they "smote all their enemies with the stroke of the sword, and slaughter, and destruction, and slew of their foes seventy and five thousand" within the realm. So all ends well.

But when I had read this story with the eyes of maturity, and recalled the legend as I had so long carried it in my heart, suddenly a noble and romantic figure, the great queen and heroine Esther, crashed at my feet into a pile of dust that smelled a little like the heaps of old clothes collected by Jewish rag-pickers.

I wandered on, that night, to other stories. It would be wearisome to detail them all; I may summarize by saying that they were all very depressing. As a man of letters, I admired their style, but as a human being, I loathed their content. I read of the good advice given by Moses, under God's direct guidance, which resulted in the Israelites thriftily borrowing from the trusting Egyptians much "jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment," in order that they might make off with these goods when they fled from Egypt. I learned that the Lord God deliberately "hardened Pharaoh's heart,—," and then with equal deliberation smote Pharaoh and his unoffending people with seven plagues, merely because Pharaoh acted according to the dictates put into his heart by God Himself. And I read of David's conception of what constitutes loyalty to one's subordinate officers in the army; and of the elaborate series of taboos and sacrifices which "the Lord spake unto Moses," according to the provisions of which the relatives of Moses were created a perpetual

hereditary priesthood and endowed with luscious perquisites, such as the "firstlings among thy cattle," and "atonement offerings" for all kind of imaginary sins. I perused frightful tales of corruption, cruelty, lust, bloodthirstiness: I saw a vivid picture of an old, horrible, superstition-ridden world, where the tribal security was the only social consideration of any importance, where God and man moved in equally barbaric disregard of common decency, and where the forces of ignorance, priestcraft, and unscrupulous selfishness mingled in a witches' dance compared with which the Devil's own Walpurgisnacht on the Brocken seems a mere innocent woodland-ballet.

After reading all these demoralizing tales, my mind went back to the type of man of whom I spoke earlier in this paper—the man to whom the Bible is the most important, if not, indeed, the only book,—the man who has little opportunity to correct by other reading the influence of these barbarous records, and almost no opportunity to see them set in their proper perspective. And I wondered why these shocking, evil Old Testament pages should be deliberately put into the hands of such a man,—who, by no great stretch of the imagination, may before many years be a soldier in the ranks of the Social Revolution in America. Hopefully as we may anticipate that America will escape such scenes as Russia has lately witnessed, still only an ostrich would dare to say that what I suggest is impossible. Therefore, I am wondering if the prosperous gentlemen who so eagerly subscribe great sums of money to Bible Societies have fully appreciated the possible effect of impressing sanguinary tales on simple minds. What may be the eventual result of keeping alive in men's hearts such wicked patterns of revenge and hatred, such examples of the satisfaction which comes from "smiting the oppressor with the edge of the sword," such sinister records of irreconcilable class-enmities? To what purpose are the cruel events that made up the history of an un-

civilized little tribe in prehistoric Asia Minor so vividly perpetuated as a Gospel? I am wondering whether some of the quiet, respectable people who are now confidently spreading the Old Testament may not live to regret the day when they so recklessly urged an old-world barbarism upon the ignorant, superstitious hordes who come to America. If the hordes refrain from taking complete and despotic possession "with the edge of the sword," it will not be because of a lack of example by the God of Israel. I repeat, this is no idle fancy which I am expressing. Nor is it fantastic to visualize a clear and somewhat ironic picture of one of these Bible-spreading gentlemen hiding in terror under his bed, while in the surging streets outside a howling mob batters at his door,—a mob no more and no less fanatical than the one whose prophets cried, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee! For ye have sown the wind, and ye shall reap the whirlwind!" Such a thing may happen. For when you set an ignorant man to thinking of the injustices of our modern social order, and then put into his hands a holy book wherein he is readily able to identify his fury and his fate with those of God's long-oppressed chosen people, then you are not very far from creating a fanatic who will stop at nothing.

I do not suggest that the Bible should be altogether suppressed; for I am deeply opposed to the arbitrary suppression or even the censoring of any book whatsoever. But I do say that the reading of the Bible should be quietly discouraged; and that the ingenuity of our intellectual leaders should be directed toward that end. A few decades of intelligent coöperation among educators, publicists, writers, and the clergy could greatly diminish its circulation, and might happily result in leaving it stranded in the backwaters of Western life. I would not prohibit the reading of the Bible, but I would bend every effort toward putting it into the same class as such little-read books as the *Iliad*, the *Koran* and the

Mahabaratta. There, among other reports of ancient and obsolete superstitions, among other somewhat inaccurate records of shadowy historical events, it would be readily available for the scholar; but it would not be likely to exert much pernicious influence on the man in the street. The decision to treat the Gospels in this manner was arrived at by a very wise religious organization a long time ago; one must view with admiration the sagacity of the Catholic Church in its long effort to keep the Bible out of the hands of the laity. Plato adopted a similar attitude toward the great sacred book of his time and race; he excluded the works of Homer from his New Republic because of the immoral superstitions in them.

I have been speaking so far of the Old Testament only; I must leave it to some other inquirer to determine whether the New Testament can conveniently be detached from the rest of the book, and given a breadth of circulation that must be denied to the Old. My own impression is that the division would be difficult, and would meet with much opposition. If the two parts are indeed inseparable, then it seems wiser that both should be allowed to sink into obscurity; for it must be gravely doubted whether the aggressive bellicosity preached by the Old Testament does not in the long run exert a far more powerful influence on men's minds than does the gentleness and charity preached by the New. The recent history of a Europe which has for ages been Christian makes argument on this point superfluous.

Thus the book cannot be regarded as anything but a vicious book. Reading it today with unprejudiced eyes, one sees mirrored in it precisely the kind of events whose recital one deplures when one sees them daily on the front pages of our worst class of newspapers. And it is not the leaders of social revolution, but the leaders of capitalism, who insist on flaunting before the new-come foreigner these ancient Jewish examples of class-hatred, bloody revolt, and the laying waste of cities.

SIX ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTORS

BY D. W. SINCLAIR

FROM the standpoint of a musician playing in the orchestra—and this article is written by and from the standpoint of a musician playing in the orchestra—the quality most necessary to a good conductor is simply the ability to inspire his men—to lift them out of the boredom that follows too much music, and fill them with enthusiasm.

Erudition alone cannot do this, and neither can mere temperament, so-called. The competent orchestral performer already has enough of both. Playing is his trade, and he is presumed to have mastered it. He knows all the traditions of the classical répertoire; he understands his own instrument; he is adept at all the devices of what is called routine. What he needs, now, to make him play divinely, as individual and as unit in the group, is contact with an arresting and dominating musical personality—in brief, with a conductor who, as a musician, is a great man.

Such great men are necessarily rare in music; they have been extremely rare among the conductors practising in America. In this paper I shall discuss six conductors under whom I have played myself: Stransky, Bodansky, Hadley, Damosch, Monteux and Mengelberg. Among them there is but one who meets fully the test I have set up.

II

First, I consider Josef Stransky, for twelve years conductor of the New York Philharmonic. Succeeding one of the greatest figures in modern music, the late Gustav Mahler, Stransky maintained himself so long, not so much by his musical abilities

as by his social charm and personal cleverness. He was one of the most astute opportunists ever seen in a like position; it is a pity, indeed, that abler conductors have so often lacked his genius to fortify his citadel. To be sure, his vogue did not depend solely upon his appeal to the powers behind the scene; he possessed, too, in great richness, that mock-heroic magnetism which wins large audiences. Given a superstructure imposing and ornate enough, and the interior can take care of itself: a national maxim. The Stransky façade was for a long time of the impregnable sort; his delicate hauteur and impassioned nobility were fully adequate to confound the unilluminate. And with an orchestra of able musicians always willing to do their best—which, by the way, was excellent—and a few older and more or less respected section-principals to offer counsel in perilous exigencies, no one but a few captious persons who remembered the Seidls, Weingartners, Toscaninis and Mucks so much as questioned his pre-eminence until his régime prepared to die gracefully of its own decrepitude.

So long as sufficient Beethoven, Tschai-kowsky, Wagner, and Liszt is given, New York audiences seem to survive whatever else a conductor has the temerity to produce in a season. Stransky's reputation as a conductor of Liszt and Wagner undoubtedly grew out of the innumerable performances he gave to their works; it certainly did not come from the confused and unfinished performances themselves. He, of course, played many other composers. He offered Borodin, Rachmaninoff, Sibelius, Debussy, Mahler even. He was as kind to

Schubert and Mozart as any colleague has ever been. Haydn's "Military" Symphony was a special pet of his; also Dvořák's "New World." He was more than considerate of Americans. In short, he was wise enough to recognize the value of variety in pacifying those detractors who were wont to insist that he could give adequately only a limited répertoire. But few of his enthusiastic supporters, and perhaps fewer yet of the vast majority of musically untrained persons who made up his audiences realize even now that nearly all of the Philharmonic's concerts during his tenure were totally deficient in orchestral finesse, in grasp of the salient characteristics of the works played, and in ability to turn tradition to its proper account.

Such qualities could hardly be expected from one who scrupled not to alter dynamics, tempi and even instrumentation and notation whenever it pleased his whim, in the works of any and all composers, from Haydn to Tchaikowsky. Alterations of any sort may be used only with discretion by even the greatest of conductors. In fact, the only generally accepted ones that come to mind are the substitution of horns for bassoons in the restatement of the initial horn call in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and the like substitution of a horn for a clarinet in the "Egmont" Overture. Any musician can give the reasons for these alterations, which are nearly traditional today, but a hundred would be hard put to find a single reason among them for the wholesale butchery performed by the leader of the Philharmonic. Some conductors may know enough to aid inexperienced American composers; few are expert enough to correct the accepted masters of all time. And certainly Stransky was not.

But this particular intrepidity was, after all, but an accompaniment of other shortcomings that always characterize the second-rate conductor. Such a man, deficient in sure authority, must contrive to impersonate it as much as possible. In

order to buttress his essential weaknesses, Stransky sought to convey an impression of supreme superiority. Yet in his gaudy armor the performer before him could detect frequent transparencies. It is impossible to delude musicians for long; equally difficult to gain and hold their respect. Therefore, having no other resource when it became evident that certain of his ventures in orchestration, in interpretation and in making cuts were producing grotesque effects and perhaps a mild humor among his men, Stransky took refuge in a febrile petulance that was often pitiful. A healthy, self-assured competence never flowed from him.

The inefficient conductor, alas, passes his career much more unpleasantly than is usually suspected. He is not responsible to the musicians in any artistic sense; if his employers are satisfied, nothing else matters. But his real troubles, no matter how much arrogance he may assume, are when working with his men. What he himself lacks must be made up from them, and usually is. Hence he often gravitates gently into a semi-detached reliance upon them, and manifests extreme displeasure if they do not perform with such perfection as to offset his own faults. If he would admit to them his dependence, all would be well enough, for musicians are unbelievably long-suffering, and congenitally loyal to the man with the stick. However, like other humankind they cannot be trusted to preserve diplomatic secrets; so that the second-rate conductor only too often tries to escape their babbling by grandly ignoring his weaknesses both in public and private.

III

The associate conductor of the Philharmonic, perhaps through no fault of his own, falls into the same category. Henry Hadley is one of the sincerest of musicians, well-schooled in almost everything but the technique of conducting. His knowledge of orchestration, composition and the

routine of music in general is absolutely beyond question. As a musician he is head and shoulders above nearly all other contemporary conductors in America. But he has never had the good-fortune to get himself thoroughly entrenched as an orchestral conductor; his opportunities with the Philharmonic are confined to two weeks' concerts annually, during which he is expected to produce five or six American compositions. Hence it may be unjust to assume that his performances represent the highest ability he might develop. His rehearsals, which in fairness must be admitted to be insufficient, are too superficial to be memorable. Perhaps it is this very lack of time that often makes him irascible, inconsistent and provoking; but it must not be forgotten that the thoroughly equipped conductor seldom needs to invoke querulousness and obscurity. Hadley's instability before an orchestra is most regrettable in view of the fact that off stage he is one of the most ingenuous, unassuming, and comradely of men.

In Walter Damrosch is found another example of the accomplished musician deficient in conducting talent. The New York Symphony's performances are for the most part very tame. Despite a personnel as capable in most respects as that of any other major American orchestra, its conductor seems able to present little more than technically proficient renderings. It is not by his conducting but by other means that Damrosch has contrived to keep his security. He is an excellent pianist: for a conductor to step down from the stand and take the part of a performer is always a fillip for the audience. He has done much touring over the country as a missionary to the musical heathen: a glamorous reputation is thereby enhanced. He has fathered and nourished children's, young people's, and other educational concert series. He is thoroughly at home in professional controversy, as witness his ill-disguised denunciation of Mengelberg two years ago, directed ostensibly at claquees. Therefore, he remains perennially a cen-

tral figure. His standing is not questioned by the polite. By the impolite he has not been taken very seriously except as a basis of idle comparison with some of the Philharmonic's conductors. Thus it runs: He is better than Stransky; inferior to Bodanzky; more experienced than Van Hoogstraten, etc. The impolite, of course, do not essay the unkind comparison with Mahler or Mengelberg. As a sufficient commentary on the doctor's fitness to cope with such giants, it may be noticed that as soon as Mengelberg was engaged as a perennial guest-conductor by the Philharmonic, the New York Symphony began also to import guest-conductors. Thus, in 1921-1922 and 1922-1923 appeared Coates, the Englishman; this year there is Bruno Walter. Something must be done to keep the cognoscenti from migrating to Carnegie Hall.

IV

A conductor who has had but a limited career as leader of a symphony orchestra is Arthur Bodanzky of the staff of the Metropolitan Opera. Bodanzky, called to the New Symphony Orchestra in 1919-1920, after Edgar Varese had made a mess of his leadership, remained at the head of that organization, which became the National Symphony the next year, for two seasons. In 1920-1921 his orchestra was reorganized and except for a few incompetents compared favorably with any in America. But Bodanzky never brought it to the degree of achievement of which it was capable. It was not easy to determine the reasons for this at first. Only after Mengelberg had come, seen and conquered did the shortcomings of his predecessor become apparent. Bodanzky is a studious person, charged with a high degree of ardor, and straightforwardly, uncompromisingly idealistic. As a symphonic conductor, however, he gave an impression of being unfamiliar with what he was there to direct. There was a vast reserve of power, musical intelligence, and superior

possibility in his orchestra that he did not seem even to suspect, let alone employ. A like criticism might be made of his readings. For one so imbued with the importance of the position he held, and displaying as he did in pre-Mengelberg days so ungrateful a superfluity of irritable *amour-propre*, those readings, conceived in what must have been a distinct belief in their worth and originality, constantly fell short of what was to be expected of the military discipline which bore them company. An exception might be made of Bodanzky's accompaniments for soloists, which, presumably because of his long experience in opera, were singularly careful and restrained.

In playing new scores, and in fact any music unfamiliar to the general répertoire, Bodanzky did considerably better than most of his contemporaries. This was because he worked hard at his calling, and where there was little tradition he had a good chance to show his musicianship. In such cases he often displayed an extensive grasp of orchestration and interpretation. An ornate symphonic poem of Glière, for instance, he made to sound very solid and satisfactory. One remembers rehearsing Ravel's "Mother Goose" suite with him. The waltz-like "Beauty and the Beast" showed him extremely sensitive; he reminded the men that it was "Ravel, not Waldteufel." He also had the courage and knowledge to give Bruckner's rarely-heard Romantic Symphony a very illuminating performance. Lately, with his Friends of Music, he gave Mahler's "Lieder von der Erde"—and gave it a splendid reading for which he deserved nothing but praise. But in the ordinary répertoire his anxiety to create an impression of perfection often led him into stilted and unimaginative paths. Insisting on perfect technical precision, he contrived to vitiate a great deal of the lyricism and passion that certain composers, Brahms and Schubert for instance, offer. In effect, one felt that while the orchestra was playing very well it had only scratched the surface.

Relinquishing his baton to Mengelberg in 1921 seemed to have a definitely subversive effect on his conducting. When he returned to finish the last six weeks of the season the difference in him was immediately noticeable. He seemed to feel chastened, subdued; to have lost or mislaid the confident, authoritative bearing that had stamped him before. Mengelberg had made it impossible for any lesser figure to inspire the orchestra. Bodanzky's requirements seemed so simple after Mengelberg's that he and the men were unable to re-establish the harmony that had formerly prevailed between them. And when, a year later, Bodanzky conducted six Philharmonic concerts that the directors had thrown him as a sop for taking his orchestra away from him, he seemed an indifferent and disappointed man. He simply went through the motions, waving his baton over his score as if, in Toonerville parlance, he did not give a damn whether school kept or not. It was in truth a pity that he was not given the chance to continue as a symphonic conductor and to improve as he probably would have. For despite his defects, he was, when the musicians paid attention to business, a pleasant man to work with. He made his rehearsals short and not too onerous, and one detected a larger and more expansive nature in him than he was in the habit of showing.

V

Pierre Monteux, who is now finishing a four years' engagement as conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, though not an outstanding personage, nevertheless merits the best that can be said of him. And that best may be immediately summarized by stating that Monteux is of that rare type: a conductor of elasticity and variety.

Nothing is more needed in America, where a limited symphonic répertoire is being run into the ground year after year. To be sure, the Boston position offers its incumbent *carte blanche* in the choice of programs; but even this apparent advan-

tage can be misappropriated, as it was by Henri Rabaud, who, in 1918-1919, produced a nauseating succession of Gallic inconsequentialities. Monteux, however, has not abused his power. For four years he has given programs which have put his colleagues to shame and incidentally he has found hearings for more composers than any three of them. He has done this, moreover, in spite of the handicap of having to build up practically a new orchestra. The Boston program books of 1918 and 1924 show at least sixty changes from the personnel that existed before the trustees disrupted Dr. Muck's orchestra by expelling its unnaturalized German members in deference to the hysteria of wartime. The trustees were equally purblind in paying such wretched salaries that voluntary resignations and the strike of 1920 took away at least forty more. Monteux, therefore, deserves high credit for his reconstruction of the orchestra.

He is no gilded personage. In fact, he is so quiet and unassuming that he gives an impression of far less ability than he possesses. He has a better ear than any other conductor save Mengelberg, and is an exceedingly versatile musician. His performances lack, as a rule, the crystalline purity and flawlessness that characterized those of Nikisch and Muck, but they are far more satisfying and inherently musical than those of any of the contemporary crew of second-raters. His limitations proceed from the fact that he appears to care more for the music than for the performance. Unquestionably courageous in conception, he often showed in rehearsal deficiencies in detail. When he placed stress on one effect he was likely to leave two unnoticed. One came to the performance rather doubtful that the rehearsals had settled all matters of importance. Mistakes occurred (generally unnoticed, of course, by audiences and critics) which could have been avoided.

His classics—Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms,—seemed always incomplete, glossed over, hurried. The repose of rev-

erence was not in him; it was simply a matter of one more symphony to be got through in order to clear the path for the modern intricacies that he dearly loves and in the playing of which he excels. If anyone can popularize the futuristic musical idiom Monteux is the man to do it. For he has a definite flair for discovering and emphasizing the bizarre, and he is a thorough enough musician to measure and reproduce whatever virtues the modern school contains. He has done much for Stravinsky, Ravel, Debussy, Florent Schmitt, Dukas, the entire crowd of curious Italian cacophonists, and a few Anglo-Saxons of talent, such as Bax and the late Charles Griffis.

His lack of greatness lies more in his personality than in anything else. He does not do himself justice. His beat is too rounded, his gestures too excitable, and he smiles too easily. With a discreet admixture of German precision he would perhaps attain to the importance that his energetic and excessive volatility cannot secure for him. It is a question, however, if in replacing him with Kussevitzy, the Boston trustees have not substituted for a broad and catholic musician a mere prima donna.

VI

Having thus disposed of a number of lesser lights, I come at last to the man who is undeniably the greatest not only of the men here discussed but of all men now conducting orchestras in America. Willem Mengelberg, since he performed the memorable achievement of transfiguring the National Symphony Orchestra in 1921, has no competitor to fear and no superior to yield to. Mengelberg has furnished the subject-matter for countless idiotic reviews and many absurd and childish controversies. But beside him his detractors are yelping pygmies; before his tremendous eminence they prove themselves little better than blind fools.

Mengelberg is the *ne plus ultra* of drill-masters; his knowledge of orchestral in-

struments and effects is microscopically complete. For another thing, he combines all sorts of temperaments in one: he has thoroughly assimilated the romantic, the precise, the energetic, the tender, the ruthless. Again, he has obviously devoted time to study as well as to conducting, for he is wonderfully acute and penetrating in getting the last drop of blood from the music before him. Further still, when he is free of hurry and irritation he simply radiates, almost exudes, a fine sympathy with his musicians, their capabilities and their problems.

Mengelberg has a decidedly individual musical aesthetic. It consists primarily of a unique conception of the extent and requirements of orchestral technique, which in rehearsal is exploited, taught and worked over to a high degree. The second and equally important part is the interpretive conception, which Mengelberg has developed to so fine a point that in his directions to his men he makes use of all possible analogies, constantly introducing the quaintest, drollest and simplest comparisons in order to explain his desires. He has always insisted on this dual purpose of an orchestra: to play perfectly is one-half, to make the audience understand the meaning of the music is the other. A performance failing in either way is to him no performance at all. Personally, I believe he is too sanguine in his hopes of blasé, mis-educated and clique-ridden New York; but it cannot be denied that he has had a tremendous emotional effect there.

Once, preparing Strauss's "Don Juan" he failed to get from the orchestra the enormous power that rests in that superb score. He shook his fist in the air and burst out, "Don Juan is not weak—not an I-beg-your-pardon sort of man—he is strong—" here the fist shot upward to the consternation of the National Symphony's girl-harpist—"a new woman every day!" (Appropriate blushes from the harpist, but a cheerful response from the men). Rehearsing César Franck's delicate "Psyché" suite, he said: "Psyché is not a great, big—" here

indicating a female of washboiler proportions—; "she is a beautiful, sweet girl. If you have not all known a Psyché, you can't possibly play this music!" ("Known," in the Biblical sense, undoubtedly!) Brahms' "Academic Festival" Overture presented difficulties—it was too sweet to suit him. Quoth Willem; "Here are professors—dry old professors!"—accompanying his elucidation by making faces. For Berlioz' Scaffold-March in the "Symphonie Fantastique" he yelled: "You must play like devils!" Preparing Tschai-kowsky's Fifth, he demanded herculean power. "Yes," he smiled sympathetically at the jaded orchestra, "Tschai-kowsky is strong—but *I am stronger!*" No one who heard the performance could possibly doubt it.

The production in 1922 of Mahler's great Third Symphony furnished him with no end of opportunity. The flower movement was not played delicately enough. "No," said Mengelberg, "not so"—holding up a pitying forefinger—"but so—the poor little flower must die!" And, the E-flat clarinetist failing to achieve the needed raucousness in the ensuing animal-picture: "You are supposed to be a donkey—and you play like a *lady* donkey!" Of the first movement, with its introduction of sombre misery, and the succeeding march-movement, magnificent in its unsophisticated vulgarity: "This music tells of the future—we are *living in other times*. (Wir leben in andere Zeiten). Mahler understood these things!" Nothing is left out of Mengelberg's conceptions of art; everything is grist to his mill. How much ranting by critics about Mahler's apparent shallowness we might have been spared if these omnipotent preceptors of public taste had attended that rehearsal!

The real cause of the attacks that Mengelberg has had to contend with lies in his having been transplanted from the National Symphony to the Philharmonic, or as it might be expressed, from a free experiment to an established institution. The National Symphony was the ideal field for

him because he had no rivals or deterrents in his own house. The National's audiences were not composed merely of *Bodanzkianer*. They included also the most enlightened orchestra patrons in New York—those who for a decade had been growing tired of the immovability of Stransky and Damrosch, and who came to the National's concerts because they signified a new venture. These audiences, very responsive to Bodansky, went completely out of their heads and senses when Mengelberg appeared on the scene. The enthusiasm of the 1921 National Symphony concerts has not been equalled since. It was spontaneous, uproarious, incredulous and delighted at once. When Mengelberg went to the Philharmonic after the merger, he found a far different setting. The Philharmonic subscribers were so befuddled with the notion that Stransky was a superman that they were not properly receptive and unprejudiced.

Mengelberg tried at first to win them. He could have done so, probably, if he had enjoyed a free hand. But he has had no such good-fortune. He must play largely what the majority of the directorate decides. To this handicap (wherever were any directors competent to supervise the operations of a genius?) is added the apparent necessity of catering to the sentimental ignorance of the established audience. An orchestra must show a reasonable

degree of financial success: Tschaikowsky, Wagner and Liszt pull in the mob. The critics, moreover, have forever disgraced themselves by snarling about Mengelberg's programs. Therefore the inevitable has come to pass; he has adapted himself in the past two years to New York, which is a terrible pity. But otherwise he would not be able to hold his own in the system of American musical politics.

No more Mahler; no Bruckner; Schumann's beautiful "Manfred" Overture received in myopic silence; no chance whatever, of course, for more than a superficial presentation of composers such as Monteux and Stock have played. American composers? My God, no; unless it be an instrumental star such as Schelling (no derogation implied), or a public figure, like the yeasty Goldmark. Why not? Because America refuses to countenance the free play of genius. It wants to buy its art as if it were ordering coal or potatoes; to stipulate the quantity and the quality. It will not be taught—it will not surrender its inferior, querulous egotism. It is so generally incompetent that it will not let anyone be magnificently competent. It will have no prophets. In Amsterdam Mengelberg is the national figure he deserves to be; New York is too shallow, too afraid of having to admit its own defects to accord him the freedom and power that are his due.

EDITORIAL

NO COUNTRY in the world, as everyone knows, is so fecund of political mountebanks as this, our great free Republic, the mentor and exemplar of Christendom. We not only produce the largest annual crop known to faunal statisticians, relatively and absolutely; we also produce the most lush diversity of species and the most copious multiplicity of strange, unprecedented de Vriesian mutations. So rich is this variety, indeed, that descriptive zoölogy is bankrupted, and the same banal, almost anonymous label has to be stuck upon specimens of the utmost unlikeness. What pair of messiahs could differ more harshly than Hiram and Magnus, the one a pedantic little fellow with a chelonian paunch and gold eye-glasses and the other a rough, shaggy, carnivorous revivalist from the dreadful steppes? Yet both are Johnsons, and the same ancient name had to do service, in an era now closed, for two prophets even more diverse, Andrew and Tom L. One is hard put, indeed, to find points of similarity between individuals so at odds. A Roosevelt and a Tom Watson, a Jerry Simpson and a Charles Evans Hughes seem to belong to different genera, even to different solar systems. Yet the patient scientist, laboriously examining and classifying these variegated and precious paladins of democracy, is suddenly struck with a likeness that runs through the pack from end to end, binding even the most bizarre and inordinate specimens into a compact brotherhood; nay, more, he finds *two* likenesses. The first lies in the fact that all are born hot for jobs, and never cease to hunt them until dust returns to dust. The other lies in the fact that all share the same passionate tenderness for the humble husbandman, the lonely companion of

Bos taurus, the sweating and persecuted farmer.

A reader for years of the *Congressional Record*—which, in accuracy, is to all other American journals as an autopsy is to an Elks' lodge of sorrow—I have encountered in its dense and pregnant columns denunciations of almost every human act or idea that is imaginable, from adultery to Zionism, and of all classes of men that the legislative mind is aware of, from Antinomians to Zoroastrians, but never once have I observed the slightest insolence, direct or indirect, to the farmer. He is, indeed, the pet above all other pets, the enchantment and delight, the saint and archangel of all the unearthly Sganarelles and Scaramouches who roar in the two houses of Congress. He is more to them, day in and day out, than whole herds of Honest Workingmen, Gallant Jack Tars and Heroic Miners; he is more, even, than a platoon of Unknown Soldiers. There are days when one or another of these totems of the statesman is bathed with such devotion that it would make the Gracchi blush, but there is never a day that the farmer doesn't get his share, and there is many a day when he gets ten times his share—when, indeed, he is completely submerged in rhetorical vaseline, so that it is hard to tell which end of him is made in the image of God and which is mere hoof. No session ever begins without a grand assault at all arms upon his hereditary foes, from the boll-weevil and the San José scale to Wall Street and the Interstate Commerce Commission. And no session comes to an end without a huge grist of new laws to save him from them—laws embodying the most subtle statecraft of the most daring and ingenious body of lawmakers ever assembled under one roof on the habitable globe.

One might almost argue that the chief, and perhaps even the only aim of legislation in These States is to succor and secure the farmer. If, while the bombs of goose-grease and rockets of pomade are going off in the two Chambers, certain evil men meet in the basement and hook *banderillas* into him—say by inserting jokers into the chemical schedule of a new tariff bill, or by getting the long-haul rules changed, or by manipulating the loans of the Federal Reserve Banks—, then the crime is not against him alone: it is against the whole American people, the common decency of Christendom, and the Holy Ghost. Horn a farmer, and you stand in contumacy to the platforms of all known parties, to the devout faith of all known statesmen, and to God. *Laborantem agricolam oportet primum de fructibus percipere.*

Paul wrote to the Bishop of Ephesus, at the latest, in the year 65 A. D.; the doctrine that I have ascribed to the Mesmers and Grimaldis of our politics is thus not a novelty of their contrivance, any more than their quest for jobs is a novelty of their contrivance. Nor is it, indeed, their monopoly, for it seems to be shared by all Americans who are articulate and devote themselves to political metaphysics and good works. The farmer is praised by Judge Elbert Gary and by William Z. Foster, by Judge Ben B. Lindsey and by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and by the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis; I have even seen kind words for him in the monthly circular of the National City Bank. Am I, indeed, the first to raise a murmur against him? If so, then let it be a murmur for ten thousand trombones *fortissimo*, with solid chords for bombardons and ophicleides in the bass clef. And let its text be the simple doctrine that the farmer is, for all his alleged woes, predominantly a fraud and an ignoramus, that he richly deserves nine-tenths of what he suffers under our economic system, and that any city man, not insane, who sheds tears for him is shedding tears of the crocodile.

II

No more grasping, selfish and dishonest mammal, indeed, is known to students of the Anthropeidea. When the going is good for him he robs the rest of us up to the extreme limit of our endurance; when the going is bad he comes bawling for help out of the public till. Has anyone ever heard of a farmer making any sacrifice of his own interest, however slight, to the common good? Has anyone ever heard of a farmer advocating any political idea that was not absolutely self-seeking—that was not, in fact, deliberately designed to loot the rest of us to his gain? Greenbackism, free silver, government guarantee of prices, bounties on exports of foodstuffs, all the complex fiscal imbecilities of the cow State John Baptists—these are the contributions of the virtuous husbandman to American political theory. There never has been a time, in good seasons or bad, when his hands were not itching for more; there has never been a time when he was not ready to support any charlatan, however grotesque, who promised to get it for him. Why, indeed, are politicians so polite to him—before election, so obscenely amorous? For the plain and simple reason that only one issue ever interests or fetches him, and that is the issue of his own profit. He must be promised something definite and valuable, to be paid to him alone, or he is off after some other mountebank. He simply cannot imagine himself as a citizen of a commonwealth, in duty bound to give as well as take; he can imagine himself only as getting it all and giving nothing.

Yet we are asked to venerate this prehensile moron as the *Ur-burgher*, the citizen *par excellence*, the foundation-stone of the state. And why? Because he produces something that all of us must have—that we must get somehow on penalty of death. And how do we get it from him? By submitting helplessly to his unconscionable blackmailing—by paying him, not under any rule of reason, but in proportion to his roguery and incompetence, and hence

to the direness of our need. I doubt that the American people, as a whole, would submit to that sort of high-jacking, year in and year out, from any other necessary class of men. When the railroad workman attempted it, in 1916, there was instant indignation; when a certain small squad of the *Polizei* tried it, a few years later, there was such universal horror that a politician who put down the crime became President of the United States. But the farmers do it over and over again, without challenge or reprisal, and the only thing that keeps them from reducing us, at intervals, to actual famine is their own imbecile knavery. They are all willing and eager to pillage us by starving us, but they can't do it because they can't resist attempts to swindle each other. Recall, for example, the case of the cotton-growers in the South. They agreed among themselves to cut down the cotton acreage in order to inflate the price—and instantly every party to the agreement began planting *more* cotton in order to profit by the abstinence of his neighbors. That abstinence being wholly imaginary, the price of cotton fell instead of going up—and then the entire pack of scoundrels began demanding assistance from the national treasury—in other words, began demanding that the rest of us indemnify them for the failure of their plot to blackmail us!

The same demand is made almost annually by the wheat farmers of the Middle West. It is the theory of the zanies who perform at Washington that a grower of wheat devotes himself to that banal art in a philanthropic and patriotic spirit—that he plants and harvests his crop in order that the folks of the cities may not go without bread. It is the plain fact that he raises wheat because it takes less labor than any other crop—because it enables him, after working sixty days a year, to loaf the rest of the twelve months. If wheat-raising could be taken out of the hands of such lazy *fellahin* and organized as the production of iron or cement is organized, the price might be reduced by a

half, and still leave a large profit for entrepreneurs. It vacillates dangerously today, not because speculators manipulate it, but because the crop is irregular and undependable—that is to say, because those who make it are incompetent. The worst speculators, as everyone knows, are the farmers themselves. They hold their wheat as long as they can, borrowing our money from the country banks and hoping prayerfully for a rise. If it goes up, then we pay them an extra and unearned profit. If it goes down, then they demand legislation to prevent it going down next time. Sixty days a year they work; the rest of the time they gamble with our bellies. It is probably the safest gambling ever heard of. Now and then, true enough, a yokel who plunges too heavily comes to grief, and is ingested by the county-town mortgage shark; now and then a whole county, or State or even larger area goes bankrupt, and the financial dominoes begin falling all along the line stretching from Saleratus Center to New York. But such catastrophes are rare, and they leave no scars. When a speculator goes broke in Wall Street it is a scandalous matter, and if he happens to have rooked anybody of importance he is railroaded to jail. But when a speculator goes broke in the great open spaces, there is a great rush of political leucocytes to the scene, and presently it is made known that the sin was not the speculator's at all, but his projected victims', and that it is the prime duty of the latter, by lawful order upon the Treasurer of the United States, to reimburse him his losses and set him up for another trial.

The notion that wheat would be much cheaper and the supply far more dependable if it were grown, not by a motley horde of such puerile loafers and gamblers, but by competent men intelligently organized is not mine; I borrow it from Henry Ford, a busted seer. Now that he has betrayed them to Dr. Coolidge for a mess of pottage, the poor Liberals, once so enamored of his sagacity, denounce him as an idiot and a villain. Nevertheless, the fact

remains that Ford's discussion of the wastefulness of our present system of wheat-growing, in the autobiography which he didn't write, is full of a powerful plausibility. Ford was born and brought up on a farm—and it was a farm, as farms go, that was very competently managed. But he knows very well that even the most competent farmer is seldom more adept than a chimpanzee playing the violin. The Liberals, indeed, cannot controvert his judgment; they have been thrown back upon belaboring his political morals. What he proposes, they argue, is simply the enslavement of the present farmer, now so gloriously free; with capitalism gradually absorbing his fields, he would have to go to work as a wage-slave. Well, why not? For one, I surely offer no objection. All the rubber we use today is raised by slave labor; so is all the morphine consumed at Hollywood. Our children are taught in school by slaves; our newspapers are edited by slaves. Wheat raised by slave labor would be just as nutritious as wheat raised by men earning \$10,000 a year, and a great deal cheaper. If the business showed a good profit, the political clowns at Washington would launch schemes to confiscate it, as they now launch schemes to make good the losses of the farmers. In any case, why bother about the fate of the farmer? If wheat went to \$10 tomorrow, and all the workmen of the cities became slaves in name as well as in fact, no farmer in this grand land of freedom would consent voluntarily to a reduction of so much as one-eighth of a cent a bushel.

III

But the *Bauer* is more than a petty swindler; he is also the prince of political nuisances. I have said that the only political proposal he can grasp is one which offers him direct loot. It is not quite true: he can also imagine one which has only the effect of harassing and damaging his enemy, the city man. The same mountebanks who get to Washington by promis-

ing to augment his gains and make good his losses devote whatever time is left over from that enterprise to saddling the rest of us with oppressive and extortionate laws, all hatched on the farm. There, where the cows low through the still night, and the jug of Peruna stands behind the stove, and bathing begins, as at Biarritz, with the vernal equinox—there is the reservoir of all the nonsensical legislation which now makes the United States a buffoon among the great nations. It was among country Methodists, practitioners of a theology degraded almost to the level of voodooism, that Prohibition was invented, and it was by country Methodists, nintenths of them actual followers of the plow, that it was fastened upon the rest of us, to the damage of our bank accounts, our dignity and our ease. What lies under it, and under all the other crazy enactments of its category, is no more and no less than the yokel's congenital and incurable hatred of the city man—his simian rage against everyone who, as he sees it, is having a better time than he is.

Now he proceeds further. Not content with assaulting us with his degraded and abominable ethics, he begins trying to force upon us his still worse theology. In the cow States Methodism has already come to the estate and puissance of a State religion; it is a criminal offense to teach any doctrine in contempt of it. No civilized man, to be sure, is yet actually in jail for the crime; civilized men simply keep out of such bleak garages for human Fords, as they keep out of Congress and Franz Josef Land. But the long arm of the Wesleyan revelation begins to stretch forth toward Babylon. The mountebank, Bryan, after years of preying upon the rustics on the promise that he would show them how to loot the cities by wholesale and *a outrance*, now reverses his collar and proposes to lead them in a jihad against what remains of American intelligence, already beleaguered in a few walled towns. We are not only to abandon the social customs of civilization at the behest of a rabble of

peasants who sleep in their underclothes; we are now to give up all the basic ideas of civilization and adopt the gross superstitions of the same mob. Is this fanciful? Is the menace remote, and to be disregarded? My apologies for suggesting that perhaps you are one of the multitude who thought that way about Prohibition, and only five years ago. Bryan is a protean harlequin, and more favored by fortune than is commonly assumed. He lost with free silver but he won with Prohibition. The chances, if my mathematics do not fail, are thus 1 to 1 that he will win, if he keeps his health, with Fundamentalism—in his own unctuous phrase, that God will be put into the Constitution. If he does, then *Eoanthropus* will triumph finally over *Homo sapiens*. If he does, then the humble swineherd will drive us all into his pen.

IV

Not much gift for Vision is needed to imagine the main outlines of the ensuing *Kultur*. The city man, as now, will bear nine-tenths of the tax burden (who ever heard of a farmer paying income tax?); the rural total immersionist will make all the laws. He makes most of them, indeed, even now; he is the reservoir from which issue Prohibition, Sunday Blue Laws, Comstockery, the whole insane complex of statutes against free speech and free thought. But with Genesis firmly lodged in the Testament of the Fathers he will be ten times as potent and a hundred times as assiduous. No constitutional impediment will remain to cripple and harass his moral fancy. The Wesleyan code of rural Kansas and Mississippi, Vermont and Minnesota will be forced upon all of us

by the full military and naval power of the United States. Civilization will gradually become felonious.

What I sing, I suppose, is a sort of Utopia. But it is not the Utopia of bawdy poets and metaphysicians; it is not the familiar Utopia of the books. It is a Utopia dreamed by seven millions of Christian husbandmen, far-flung in forty-eight sovereign States. They dream it on their long journeys down the twelve billion furrows of their seven million farms, up hill and down dale in the heat of the day. They dream it behind the stove on Winter nights, their boots off and their socks scorching, Holy Writ in their hands. They dream it as they commune with *Bos taurus*, *Sus scrofa*, *Mephitis mephitis*, the Methodist pastor, the Ford agent. It floats before their eyes as they scan the Sears-Roebuck catalogue for horse liniment, porous plasters and Bordeaux mixture; it rises before them when they assemble in their Little Bethels to be instructed in the Word of God, the plots of the Pope, the crimes of the atheists and Jews; it transfigures the Chautauquan who looms before them with his Great Message. This Utopia haunts and tortures them; they long to make it real. They have tried prayer, and it has failed; they now turn to the secular arm. The dung-fork glitters in the sun as the host prepares to march. . . .

Well, these are the sweet-smelling and altruistic agronomists whose sorrows are the *leit-motif* of our politics, whose votes keep us supplied with Bryans, Bleases and Magnus Johnsons, whose welfare is alleged to be the chief end of democratic statecraft, whose patriotism is the so-called bulwark of the so-called Republic.

H.L.M.

JOHN MAROUFAZ AND HIS SONS

BY W. L. GEORGE

JOHN MAROUFAZ was born in a frame-dwelling in O'Connorville, Iowa. He was to carry with him as a birthright the memory of Main Street, cleaving its way through unbuilt lots, passing across the colored quarter, becoming for a moment august between the First National Bank and the United Cigar Store, reverting once more through brick and frames to bungalows. His father went every morning to Union Station, from which he wandered out upon the line to tap fishplates and secure bolts. His mother, who died during his boyhood, he remembered as rather pretty, rather dirty, shrill, overworked; she commonly appeared with her hair tied up in scores of little wisps of paper. In the house no books could be found, save the Bible and the fourth volume of a History of Scotland. But throughout the week the living-room was littered with scattered colored fragments of the Sunday supplement of the O'Connorville *Post*. In the Winter Maroufaz went to school in overshoes, through a morass of melted snow and flowing mud. In the Summer, when the wind blew from Chicago, it carried great quantities of dust. In a vacant lot near by, the crickets sang. Then beauty hung over the arid land, for in the Summer sky, that was purplish black, floated a harvest moon like a pan of fire.

John Maroufaz was fortunate in one thing. Being the only child of a family disposing of thirty-five dollars a week, he was fed. He was fed notably on canned beans, canned salmon, and canned peaches. He went to school, where the teacher was enthusiastic, but where only canned knowledge was available. There he was informed

that a dollar, invested at compound interest at five per cent, doubles itself in fourteen years; that England is the hereditary enemy of America; that the old masters, notably Rembrandt, improve the mind. Also he developed himself physically, first by hurling balls in an aimless manner, then by means of erratic base-ball, and finally by engaging in sanguinary fights with his fellows. In O'Connorville etiquette decreed that if a boy fell the victor finished him with his feet. John Maroufaz conceived gods: first came the chief engineer; then Abraham Lincoln; then his mother, for he was fourteen, and she had recently been deposed from a rank higher than even that of the chief engineer. He dimly suspected the possibility of a superior god, whom he worshipped in triumphant battle hymns. But he was not clear about that one. At fourteen he knew that woman is the inferior sex, that those who make good are always right, and that it is a wise child who knows his own father when the latter comes back from the saloon.

Since Maroufaz senior worked at Union Station, John Maroufaz was sent to work at Union Station. But as he had been educated he found himself, not upon the line, but in the office of the railroad. There, for two years, he filled in long statements showing the number of tons carried from O'Connorville to Grant, and from Grant to Shuswee. He did not understand the object of these statements, and did not realize that upon them depended the possible closing of the Grant station. Nor did he care. John Maroufaz, in those days, was thinking of linen collars, and wishing that his neck were long enough to allow him to

wear the fashionable three inch. Also, he was engaged in a continual contest with his mother to preserve for ice-cream and cigarettes a sufficient portion of his wage. This contest ended when she died.

At that time, John Maroufaz was a not unattractive lad. Very distant Syriac ancestors had left him a dark face, a slightly curved nose, a thick wave in black hair, and the noblest sombre eyes. Such persons as believe in the telling of character from features, looking down into those eyes, broad and liquid as those of the gazelle, would have thought that within the heart of John must stir a prisoned soul, that at opportunity another Shelley would speak from his lips in the accents of the skylark. But, in fact, John Maroufaz was not aware of any dreams other than his desire to save enough money to buy a rifle. His tastes were modest, for he did not know woman.

Not until he reached the age of sixteen did woman come to him. Then they came with such suddenness, in a manner so devastating, that the current of his life was turned awry. Since his birth, O'Connorville had developed, thanks to the new factory of the Consolidated Lamp Corporation. Upon the hill north of the town had arisen a settlement of large houses, which called itself Norton Heights. Following the rich people, a theatre came. One evening, as Maroufaz and his friend Pete Sawry were loafing outside the theatre, watching the people go in, a large blue automobile drew up. A small hand gloved in white kid fumbled at the brass handle. The polished door opened; then, very carefully, so as not to soil her shoes, there descended a creature who was to become visionary in the life of Maroufaz. She was very small, very slim, perhaps about seventeen. Her smooth fair hair lay coiled about a little round head. The soft blue eyes lay like sapphires upon a screen of white and rose velvet. The vision shimmered with silvery crepe, quantities of it, like the stuff of dreams.

A long time seemed to elapse until Pete jolted Maroufaz in the side and remarked:

"Some swell dame!" Then he drew back, surprised by the incomprehensible fury which had overspread his companion's features. He was still more surprised when Maroufaz turned and walked away so fast that it was not worth while to follow him.

Change had smitten Maroufaz. He was recreated in an agony equal to that of birth. He was not in love, for he could not be in love with anything so remote, with a being supernaturally glimpsed. It was not that. He did not think of the girl; he built no day-dreams where he flung treasure at her little feet. What she had done for him was with her frail hands to open a window upon life. She had shown him another world, where dust did not enter houses, where there was no screaming, no quarreling. The quality of his imagination threw up a suave, remote existence of broad spaces, deep carpets, soft voices, an atmosphere of refinement and of grace. He was intoxicated, as if from a high mountain he had seen the delicate lands.

Maroufaz very soon paid for his exultation. Little by little, this mood of glory, this perception of an airy realm, converted itself into the sensation that none of this was for him, that between him and the delicacy of life lay a gulf which only the wings of a bird could hope to span. He saw himself then as he had never seen himself before. He had been a boy, enjoying the vaudeville, and made a citizen of the world by fifty cents. Now he had seen a Canaan he might not enter. Quite seriously, filled with the pessimism of his years, he resolved to throw himself that night under the 11.42.

It was very dark upon the line. His eyes were fixed upon the signal that showed green. He was calm, having touched despair and become inspired. To die . . . why not? A little earlier, a little later, what did it matter? The signal changed to red. Far away he heard the train; he heard the cry of the brakes. He was without sensation. He was already as if dead. Then, auto-

matically, he registered the start of the train. The dim sound grew loud. In the darkness he caught a glimmer of fire as the engine came near, louder and louder, closer and closer. Now to jump . . .

But he did not jump; as the engine towered above him, a strange thought had come to him: the engine was beautiful, so strong, so swift, so unrelenting, going irresistibly toward its goal.

Long after the train went by his slim body trembled, not with fear, but shaken by a sudden determination. Like the engine, he would go on strong and unrelenting, until at the end of his journey he by force penetrated the delicate lands.

II

John Maroufaz did not penetrate the delicate lands for twenty-one years. At the end of that time, the young man who stood trembling with ecstasy and ambition beside the thunderous train was a changed creature. He was much taller, broader. Indeed, the great hands sown with dark hairs, the thick neck, contrasted with the elegance of his blue serge suit and the negligence of his tie. You will imagine him, then, sitting at a broad desk almost bare of papers. He is president of the New York, Chesfield and Redway Railroad. He looks secure, and he looks strong. The dark face depends upon the massive jaw. He looks savage. The lips sit close upon the teeth: here is a man ready for all comers. About him the appointments are luxurious, for he is not a gross man. Though desk and filing-cabinet bespeak the business man, his feet rest upon a carpet olive and velvety. Upon the walls hang some Méryon etchings, and a Rubens which he will bequeath to the Metropolitan Art Museum. For Maroufaz at thirty-seven is in New York. He catches sight of himself in the mirror opposite, which enables him to watch people unobserved when he is dealing with them. He smiles. He is strong. He is pleased.

Twenty-one lives rather than twenty-

one years separate the Maroufaz of the day from the ambitious boy who told himself: "Go East, young man, as do those who desire short cuts to power." The twenty-one lives were all of them filled with contest. When he decided to become, instead of being content to be, the secret energy of his nature led him to grasp at all instead of at a little. He was going to have power, money, houses, but also he would have culture. He would at once be what he would become. Maroufaz went to night-school and learnt about costing, about insurance, and about banking. He was ready for his day's work, also for overtime, yet fit to steal from the night hours that would enhance the day. He was capturing culture. At seventeen he ceased to speak the vernacular; he learned English from Emerson and Hawthorne. At eighteen he could for hours be seen standing outside an up-town club, watching the men go in and out, noting their boots, their ties, their gestures. Sometimes, in a vacant lot, he would try his voice, practise an imitation of the tones of the cultured. Maroufaz had time for everything, even for the arts, even for literature. Now, at thirty-seven, polished, tailored and calm, it was difficult to know him from the natural products of the class which he had broken into.

That afternoon represented perhaps the apex of his career, for his railroad had just taken over its rival, the New York and Netang: Maroufaz was president of the biggest railroad system in the United States. He was worthy, for he had learnt. Cost clerk, freight agent, district superintendent, local manager, superintendent of the line, vice-president, president . . . step by step, agony by agony, Maroufaz had learnt. He had learnt to hold his tongue and to let fools talk, because this pleased fools; he had learnt to avoid boasting, to avoid self-assertion; he had learnt to exchange humorous stories when his tongue ached to get to business; he had learnt to wait until a rival uncovered, and then to strike; he had learnt to say pretty

things to women, and had succeeded in not meaning them; he had even learnt to say pretty things to men, and discovered them more susceptible to flattery than women; he had learnt to talk of golf, Bergson, and psycho-analysis as well as of freight rates. He was a complete man.

III

Love had occupied little time in the life of Maroufaz. It was the only thing for which he had no leisure. He was practically pure because woman appeared to him as a luxury, a self-indulgence, and therefore enervating. Thus he passed untouched through childish calf loves; later, when women strove to use him, he allowed them to use him and did not love them. But woman takes her revenges swiftly. Though he had long forgotten the shimmering apparition which descended from the automobile, though he had become familiar with equally shimmering apparitions in drawing-rooms, he had not hardened. He fell in love in a few minutes. This happened in an old drawing-room in a house on Murray Hill, where he had been mysteriously taken by a friend because the lady of the house was curious to see the new multi-millionaire. Set among their old Chippendale furniture and their old Chippendale traditions, the denizens of this house looked upon him with perplexity, some polite irony, and a measure of apprehension. Maroufaz did not realize this; thus, when he beheld their only daughter, Adeline, when he felt stir within him an unknown emotion which he at once called love because he did not know what to call it, he had a rapid vision of his wedding to take place within the week.

In the Maroufaz world things happened within the week. He was therefore surprised to find that it took him a year to win Adeline. In her own circle she was not called beautiful, but to Maroufaz she embodied everything of the delicate lands. She was very fair, to the point of colorlessness; even her eyes were pale. She was

slight, rather silent. But she had a quality to him immensely appealing, a strange, easy grace. When she spoke it was without striving after effect; when she looked upon him, it was without evident curiosity, without embarrassment. The charm of Adeline resided in everything that she was not, in the refinement bequeathed to her by a family which had done no work for two hundred years. Maroufaz had never met a woman to whom self-assertion was unnatural. He had met triumphant beauty, famous wit, and practised charm. He had never met what he took to be divine modesty. He did not understand that this girl, in her perfect repose, in her mildness, represented an arrogance of class infinitely greater than even his personal pride.

Maroufaz proposed to Adeline four days after meeting her, and was rejected. Four times he offered himself in vain. Her father forbade him the house, but he entered it, sometimes threatening the servants, sometimes bribing them. The family hated and feared him. He became their preoccupation. Suddenly, after he had dragged her from a dance into his automobile, the consciousness of his strength found the heart of Adeline. She fell into his arms as a blossom drops from the branch that ripens.

IV

Maroufaz knew so little of women that the discovery of Adeline impressed him like a translation into another world. He had the good fortune to have stood aloof from love, so had no means of comparing his delights with others perhaps less sharp, but still delights. As he had lived for power, now he lived for passion. He surprised Adeline. She could not understand that a man might kneel at her feet, crying out incoherently, tortured as well as entranced. She did not understand that here was the final promotion. She laid her hand upon the thick black hair in a condescending caress. She was willing to be loved. Her husband was wholly happy; within four years two boys, Cedric and Edmond, were born to them.

It seemed that the cycle was complete, for now Maroufaz had discovered a joy which he had never expected: paternity.

He did not understand at first. He had assumed, as the boys were born, that here were interlopers, that they would intrude into the romance of his existence, that they would interfere between him and his pallid, his exquisite Adeline. Not until for the first time Cedric smiled up at him did he understand, did a tug, half of pity, half of enthusiasm, impress his bosom. The exaltation which had carried him so high bubbled in him, made him snatch up the child and strain it to him until it cried out. Now Maroufaz knew a new passion. He looked down upon his boys with a voluptuous joy. They had their being through him, they were his creation, they were the assurance that his essential spirit could never die. He still puzzled Adeline because he had forced himself into her life as a burning meteor through the heavens, but Cedric and Edmond looked upon him as a great natural fact, like sunrise and thunderstorms. By his mass, by his energy, he predominated in their lives. It was to him they came from their mother's skirt. Then, as he sat one upon each knee and told them fairy tales learnt especially from a book, while Adeline knitted with brown wool a garment for the poor, he felt that life had completed itself, that its curve was closed, that within sat he, John Maroufaz, master, ingeminator of all.

Time passed. He became more powerful. His wealth increased. His sons grew older. Maroufaz was handsomer at fifty-one than he had been fourteen years before. Age had taken from his grossness; the gray in his hair relieved its blackness, and he still had his splendid eyes; he looked a male, but his personality had evolved even more than his person. At last he had a quiet polish; he spoke almost without accent, with a slow gravity that suggested perfect poise. He could avoid indiscretion, inquisitiveness, comment on the affairs of others. He knew how to speak to women with calm and courtesy; he was not im-

pressed by old families; he had met a king quietly. He had read that it takes three generations to make a gentleman, and he determined to add to his conquests the abbreviation of time.

One night, after dinner, he sat alone with Cedric. The latter, being fourteen and having just gone to a prep-school upstate, was promoted to the honor of dining with his parents. Now they sat together, the father with a cigar and a glass of port, the boy from time to time reaching out toward the fruit when he thought himself unobserved. Both the boys were akin to Maroufaz; both exhibited his darkness and his size, but it was a joy to him to find in each of them their mother's blue eyes. Cedric did not know that his father was watching him in secret amusement. But he could understand the look of passionate love which came to him from the eyes of Maroufaz a few moments later:

"Cedric," said Maroufaz. "Have you thought of what you're going to be?"

The boy considered, being of a quiet disposition. "Yes," he said. "I have thought a bit. I was thinking I'd like to be president of the N. Y. C. & R. Railroad."

Maroufaz said nothing; he was too moved. That his elder son should desire in life nothing more than to follow him was a reward indescribably sweet. All the same, he had to be fatherly: "I'm glad to hear it, Cedric. Only, you know, supposing you weren't clever enough?"

"Then," said Cedric, solemnly, "I shall be President of the United States."

Maroufaz nearly choked over his port, for Cedric was so serious and did not realize the bitterness of his implied criticism: "Well, my boy," he said, "you clearly want to be president of something, and you're quite right. It's only by wanting to be president that you become president. But one can't decide so quickly. I'd rather you went into the business, of course, especially, if you want to, but there's the law, or diplomacy, or anything you like."

"I'll think it over," said Cedric. "But I think I like the N. Y. C. & R. better than anything."

When Cedric had gone to bed Maroufaz went to the drawing-room and laughingly acquainted Adeline with the triumphant selection Cedric had made from among the occupations. Mrs. Maroufaz at forty was as pale and as sweet as she had been at twenty. Also, she was unhurried and reflective; she was inclined to ruminate. After a while she said: "Yes, I'd like him to go into your business, John. Then he could help Edmond."

"Edmond must help himself," said Maroufaz, fondly, though the words sounded harsh. Edmond was as foolish as Cedric was clever, but he had what was refused to his elder brother, great personal beauty. Everything that was strong in his father had in him become delicate. He was as subtle in design as a Neapolitan boy, and he intoxicated his father æsthetically.

"After all," Maroufaz went on, "they can do what they like. The world is open to them. They only have to choose."

Adeline did not reply. She continued to knit, while her husband took up an English novel and began to read. A few moments later it struck him as strange that the book should interest him so little. Funny! It began so well. He yawned, relit his cigar, resumed the book. Strange fellow, Cedric. Might do anything in life, with a brain like that. And he'd have his chance, bless him! Maroufaz read a few pages more, but the idea of Cedric oppressed him. He put down the book and allowed himself to think. Life was a queer thing. Here were these two boys with, as he himself said, the world open to them. They could do anything they liked. Their father could buy them a controlling interest in almost any corporation they fancied. He could use influence and make them senators, ambassadors, possibly bishops. They needed only to wish, and all could be done. Just because they were born sons of a multi-millionaire!

Because their father had collected millions, they had inherited the fullness of life: just because they were born. For no other service to mankind: just because they were born. And if they had no wish except to exist, they could enjoy abundant money in any way they fancied. Not only could they do what they wished, but they could do nothing at all: just because they were born. Maroufaz found himself thinking of his own boyhood, when he rose from his bed at five in the morning to walk through the flowing mud and melting ice to Union Station. He saw himself at the drug-store, the attendant girl contemptuous because she knew that ten cents was the limit of his expenditure. He remembered standing up to be insulted by his first chief, a youth of nineteen, who put his face close to his and breathed alcohol. A hot flush rose in the cheeks of Maroufaz as he remembered the bestial words, the filthy insults, which he had had to bear with an unmoved face. And the everlasting poverty, the collars with jagged edges which hurt his neck, the food served on tables stained with swill, the grossness and the dullness of it all. He had risen out of hell. His sons would know nothing of it, unless it amused them to visit the East Side, like Dante proceeding to Hades to call on Virgil.

"Thank God," he whispered to himself, "they'll know nothing of all that."

V

Time passed, and John Maroufaz led his ordinary life, making more money because thus only could he avoid losing any; entertaining because here was the evidence of his power; buying gifts for his wife because here was the evidence of his wealth. But now his life underwent a companionship; it was not so much a companionship as an undertone, like the sound of the second fiddle in an orchestra. He was thinking about his sons more often now. He was telling himself frequently how much he rejoiced that they would never

understand what it means to eat just a little less than one wants. At the same time he was beginning to ask himself whether it is good, whether it is bracing never to have known how precariously all humanity lives. He was asking himself whether the boys would not grow up soft. Fatherly, he told himself that he would put them in the car works of the N. Y. C. & R. where they would learn to work with their hands. This bred with his wife one of those queer little disputes which signify so much more than they seem. One evening, Adeline told him that Cedric was short of pocket money. She would have given it him herself, only the boy, with a precocious sense of order, told her that he would rather have so much a week and know where he stood. He was going to speak to his father about it next day.

"More pocket money at fifteen!" said Maroufaz. "I give the boy five dollars a week."

"Well, it isn't much," said Adeline.

"You know quite well they don't like them to have too much pocket-money at school."

"I know," said Adeline, rather pettishly. "But the rule is broken. Cedric tells me that his friend Wilbur gets ten dollars a week."

"Five dollars a week is enough for any boy," said Maroufaz, in a tone so surly that it surprised him.

"If I'd known you'd take it like this I shouldn't have mentioned it at all. But he was going to speak to you himself, and I just mentioned it because I thought it would amuse you to hear that he didn't care to have money given him, except regularly. And I really didn't think that you'd be so mean . . ."

"Mean!" said Maroufaz, very quietly. "When have you known me mean, Adeline?"

"Oh, but I didn't intend . . ."

"Still, you said it," replied Maroufaz. "I ask you again: when have I been mean?"

"No, of course not," said Adeline, a little aggressively. "Only you've got

funny ideas. You think that Cedric ought to be kept short of money just because you . . . because . . ."

"Because I was poor," said Maroufaz suddenly. "Because five dollars a week once upon a time was enough to keep me, because I'm a common man who's risen. Say it, Adeline. I know you think it."

Mrs. Maroufaz had always been mild. It surprised him that now she should get up, refuse to answer, and go slowly to the piano, where she played to herself until he left the room.

When he was alone, Maroufaz asked himself what was the matter with him! Why hadn't he agreed to give Cedric ten dollars a week? a thousand dollars a week? anything? What did it matter? From what secret spring did the impulse come? He had just given Cedric an automobile. Edmond, at thirteen, had been allowed a private room at the Ritz, where he entertained his little friends at enormous cost.

"Why won't I give him another five dollars a week?" Maroufaz asked himself. He seized his head between his hands. "Why won't I give it? I love him. Why won't I?" He was in agony. He was confronted with something that he could not understand, with turbid impulses, with a conflict of emotions so intense that his eyes started forward, that he uttered a groan.

Then he understood. He did not love Cedric, nor Edmond. All these years he had been the victim of illusion. He had thrust gifts upon the boys, and they had been gifts to himself. He had never loved them. Indeed, there ran through him a lode of hatred which suddenly outcropped. It was like something that reared its head and forced him to look at it. He hated his sons because they were happy.

Now his brain was clearer and he could understand. He hated them because they went to a boarding-school up-state, while he had been content with the public school. He hated them because at eight o'clock in the morning they lay in soft

beds, while he had risen early and gone out into a dark morning much akin to night. He hated them because they had money, while he had earned it. He hated them because it was unjust that they should be given everything, while he had been given only what he could take. Above all, he hated them because they were offered the one thing that would have been exquisite to him: opportunity. Here they were, at fifteen and thirteen, the savage, the beautiful world open to them. He went over the thoughts which he had pursued before, recalled the professions and functions they might indulge in. If that had been given to him! Perhaps he might not have had to push and scheme, sometimes to lie. It would have been easy, easy. He would have known pleasure as well as labor. He would have chosen. He would not have been thrust into the railroad business as an engine is placed upon the track and compelled to steam ahead. He would have known joyful days, enjoyed women, horses, cards, champagne, everything that he had snatched from a reluctant world when it was too late. And it was not so much that the lost delights mattered; it was the sense that such delights were given freely to his boys, that they owed them to him, that they had stolen them from him, that they owned them only because he had pursued virtue. He laughed aloud: Cedric and Edmond might be spendthrifts; they might indulge even in gentlemanly vices. He had paid the price of virtue which endowed them: courage, perseverance, thrift, clear-sightedness, justice, faith, hope, charity, all his life he had poured those out, making up the pile of virtue which could furnish his sons with the joys of vice.

VI

Maroufaz was a changed man, though he outwardly remained calm, courteous, and rich in virile charm. But now he was more merciless in his despair than he had ever been in his ambition. It was as if the world owed him revenge. Now he wanted the

last cent; enemy of man, he wanted not only his money, but his pains. Maroufaz did not so much want to succeed as to destroy.

Time passed; all that his wife and children knew was that he seemed a little quieter, a little more determined. Under a polite mask he hid the hatred he felt for them, the hatred which was now becoming the motive power of his existence. By degrees his passion grew; he felt that he must gratify it, that something must be done to satisfy his craving. When Cedric reached seventeen he proposed to send him and his brother to the car works, where they might learn the feel upon their feet of cold stone floors. But the vice-presidents laughed at him. What was the good of giving technical knowledge to boys who were going on the financial side? Besides, Cedric practically refused to obey, and Maroufaz, his eyes red and congested, just avoided disowning him. He did not quite know how it happened, but the boys did not go to the car works. Indeed, out of this arose another conflict; both boys were destined for Harvard, and Maroufaz made a vague attempt to enroll them at the new university of O'Connorville. But Adeline wept; the boys were sullen. Reproaches came to Maroufaz from Murray Hill. He wanted the boys to rise at six o'clock in the morning, to know life. But Cedric asked him what he should do at six o'clock in the morning? Nothing happened, except that Adeline pondered her husband's new peculiarities, while the boys, unable to forget their old affection, treated him with surprise.

The solution of the problem did not come to Maroufaz until one night, as he lay awake. Why had he failed to convert the boys into workmen? Why had they gone to Harvard? Why were they now, during vacation, sleeping above his head in soft warm beds? Because he had arrayed himself against social circumstance, because the sons of men such as he did not pad through the night, because they had to

go to Harvard, because sons of men such as he went to Harvard. He had proved his own enemy; he had given way to the social imperatives of his new class. Indeed his mouth was filled with Dead Sea fruit. He saw it now: he had labored and he had starved, just to force himself into a class which promised freedom and instead gave him new chains. He had to do what that class did, or in the arcanum of his mind be excluded from that class. Maroufraz sat up in bed; he was very hot, and his brain felt light. There was nothing he could do. There was no way out. He had gone on and gone on, presenting gifts to the unworthy, sparing them effort, sparing them disappointment, interposing between them and the hard life the effectual screen of riches. He couldn't stop it. He would have to go on, establish them, help them, see them marry young wives without waiting for success, see them enjoy children such as themselves, children not foreign to them. He did not understand that they would miss the greater delights: ambition, suffering, disappointment, fortitude. He saw only that he would envy them, envy them; envy the good breeding brought into their features through culture taken from the atmosphere, not torn from it; envy them their proficiency in games, for which they had time; envy them the light speech which they need not make profound; envy them all that he had given them, everything he had never had. He possessed nothing that had not come too late. They! They had arrived in time!

He rose from his bed. It maddened him to think that nothing could be done to

redress justice, that he could not snatch back the years from the swiftly unrolling scroll of time, that chance had given him power, while chance had given them youth. His breath came quickly, his eyes stared: after all, one had only one life. Why should lives be different one from the other? Why must he assist at the reaping of the crop he had enriched with his own blood? Why should they enjoy? It is the fate of man to suffer; so was it ordained; by the sweat of their brow should they eat their bread. Not bread served upon a plate of gold. It was monstrous that they should lie there sleeping, awaiting the dawn of another radiant day.

He was trembling, almost weeping, as he went along the corridor, holding away from him the weapon he carried . . . It was too much . . . he couldn't help it . . . now the door . . . it opens easily . . . the sound of a shot . . . why, the boy hardly moved . . .

The tears running down his cheeks, he must go along the corridor . . . He heard voices. "I can't help it . . . I can't. Must finish the work . . ." Again the sound of a shot . . .

The patrolman on duty turned with surprise at this man in night clothes who ran past him. He did not see the revolver. Beside, if he left his post he would miss the relief that was coming in five minutes. He wanted to go to bed. So he turned his back upon the figure that disappeared up Park Avenue. In New York, each night brought something strange.

The patrolman soothed his remorse as he reflected: "He's got a bun on."

AMERICANA

CALIFORNIA

OBITER dictum of Hahn, J., a favorite jurist of Los Angeles, in the case of the *State vs. Brown, Guthro et al.*:

There is a line of demarcation between the spooning of persons not in love and the brand of affection displayed by young persons who have plighted their troth to each other. The first class of kisses more often precede a more serious offense, and therefore are a menace to the morals of society. The kiss of love has long been recognized by society as being on a legitimate and moral basis.

EFFECTS of the Volstead Act in the faubourgs of San Francisco, as reported by the *Examiner*:

Scores of young girls and youths were found stupefied by liquor in San Mateo county road-houses by Federal Prohibition agents yesterday. Some of the girls were only 14 or 15, the agents said, while in many cases their male companions were years older. Helpless under the influence of liquor, the girls were unable to resist the attentions of the men.

COLORADO

LAUDABLE development of politeness among Colorado job-holders, as reported by the *Rocky Mountain News*:

Wayne C. Williams, a young Denver attorney, was sworn in yesterday as Attorney General of Colorado to succeed the late Russell W. Fleming. After the ceremony the new Attorney General requested each person present to pause a moment in silent prayer for his predecessor.

CONNECTICUT

PEDAGOGICAL dictum of Prof. Dr. William Lyon Phelps, of Yale, quoted in the advertising of the Moody Bible Institute:

Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated; and no other learning or culture, no matter how extensive or elegant, can form a proper substitute.

ILLINOIS

FROM a bulletin issued by the Illinois Bankers' Association:

... the Bankers Mutual Fidelity and Casualty Company has been organized ... to serve and insure Illinois banks against the risks of burglary, robbery, and fidelity.

PATHOLOGICAL effects of Prohibition in Illinois, as revealed by a news dispatch from Chicago, "the literary capital of America":

Figures compiled by State Prohibition Director Moss show that 2,289,600 persons applied for, obtained and succeeded in having filled prescriptions for whisky, gin and other alcoholic "medicines" during 1922. The prescription blanks returned number nearly 500,000 more than the government issued. A majority of the reputable physicians of Chicago refuse to write any whisky prescriptions, but those who specialize in this branch of "medicine and surgery" made approximately \$7,000,000 during 1922, while druggists who filled the prescriptions show a profit of \$2,500,000.

LOUISIANA

PROGRESS of Methodist *Kultur* in the home of the Creoles, as reported by a press dispatch from New Orleans:

The old Absinthe House, one of the landmarks in the old French quarter of New Orleans, where, according to repute, Jean Lafitte planned his piratical forays and boasted of what he and Napoleon Bonaparte would do to Messieurs les Anglais, was badly damaged last night. Prohibition agents did it all for one quarter of an ounce of absinthe, according to their official report, filed today. In the old courtyard, a door, priceless relic of the old hotel, was smashed. The book in which artists, statesmen, writers and lesser or greater notables had signed their autographs was cast carelessly upon the wreckage littered floor. Because a few drops of absinthe was found in the place, charges of possession and sale of intoxicants were placed against the proprietor.

MASSACHUSETTS

FROM a public bull by Prof. Dr. Stanley Alden, of Smith College:

American literary criticism needs above all else a stern father of Scotch Presbyterian ancestry and a Puritan conscience.

MINNESOTA

EFFECTS of the Harding literary style upon the native minstrelsy of Minnesota, as revealed by an ode by Miss Marianne Clarke, of St. Cloud:

Our Constitution is commemorated
By Puritan Fathers who arbitrated
The grand ideals of our glorious past,
May they inspire forever and cast
Abiding faith in our Declaration
For United States seek ratification
Of Law and Order, Progress and Peace—
Oh! heroes of old may thy spirit increase.

Our Constitution is the best that we know
"Go To It," stand by it, as they did long ago,
Washington, Madison, Franklin so clever
Fifty-six men were in council together;
John Marshall started the Supreme Court so
great
Now is there another Marshall to "fete"
To assemble the group of nineteen twenty-four
A world Court of Justice from shore to shore?

Practical Peace in International Relations
The power of man in Brotherhood of Nations
Strong, Righteous Service to the land of the free
America first for you and for me.
Five Presidents arose and gave us their lives,
Yes, including "Harding," all sacrificed,
The secret of life is "Be Just and Be True—
To Our Constitution—and the Red, White
and Blue."

MISSOURI

REVIVAL of beautiful letters in Missouri, as reported by a new publishing house in Kansas City:

If you enjoy *real* literature—a *Mental Feast*—a *Soul Banquet*—something that will make you bounce a little—a book that you'll call *Sweet-heart* before you get half through it, you should read *The Fool-Killer's* new book, "*Warm Wire-less Waves*." There's no book like it in human literature; it reaches mental heights of transcendent beauty and intellectual splendor that no other book ever dreamed of. It's the book you'll want to keep in the family and hand down to future generations. You'll want your wife and children to read it and *live* it. It shakes hands with your *heart* and calls you *pal*. Forty-five sizzling pages of *Soul-Music* and *Mental-Cream*. Contains the latest picture of the *Author*. Only 25c a copy or 5 for \$1.00. Sent by mail, prepaid.

NEW JERSEY

PLANS and specification for a new religion lately launched by Carl H. Norbrom, 185 North Parkway, East Orange:

1. The church ritual shall be the same as the modern Jewish Synagogue. That of Rabbi Stephen Wise at Carnegie Hall, for example.

2. It shall elect its Rabbi and officers the same as the Christian Science Church.

3. The Old and New Testaments are to be used for texts along with modern science.

4. All members must be total abstainers. No booze.

5. No member of this church may personally sue to recover a debt, nor go into voluntary bankruptcy. He must diversify his investments and use forethought that will prevent his getting into financial difficulties.

6. He must never participate in warfare against another nation, of which 50% of the people are Christians. If conscripted, he must meet the penalty for evasion. He must take a passive attitude toward war propaganda. If a non-Christian country invades his nation, he must help drive them out, but not invade their land.

7. He shall not have a larger family than that which he can afford to raise and educate decently. He should do his utmost to keep his family free from charity.

8. Women to have equal rights with men in all church positions.

9. Owing to the unfairness to the children that follow, the members of one race (color) shall not marry into another, nor shall congregations be mixed in race.

10. No member of this congregation shall ever speak ill of another man's religion.

NEW YORK

REPLIES recorded by a *Sun* reporter who sought answers in lower Broadway to the question, Should Christianity be debated from a public platform?

1. Frank Mueller, M. D., 100 East Seventy-fourth Street—I am not in favor of any discussion of Christianity on any public platform, especially of the authenticity of the word of God. Modernism and materialism and even the old Babylonian philosophy are being taught in many places in this country.

2. H. Harris, retired business man, 56 Concord Street, Brooklyn—Absolutely no. The Bible, the living word of God, has stood the test of centuries.

3. Turner A. Monroe, accountant, 120 Broadway—I believe that instead of an argument on the truth of the Bible on a public platform the preachers should teach the gospel as it is written. The Bible will take care of itself.

4. J. C. Clark, restaurateur, 135 West Forty-seventh Street—Everybody has a right to his own opinion. Free speech is allowed in this country, but to discuss on a public platform the truth of the Bible is going too far. I do not approve of it.

5. P. De Fliese, banking, 120 Broadway—I see no occasion for any debate or discussion as to the truth of the Bible. It is the only record we have, and Christianity stands or falls on its authenticity.

THE next step in the Universal Uplift, as

revealed by an editorial in the estimable *Tribune*:

So long as morons are permitted to remain at large there will be crime waves.

NORTH CAROLINA

RISE of an intellectual artistocracy in North Carolina, as reported by a Charlotte correspondent of the *New York World*:

North Carolinians read the *World* and they even read the editorial, theatre and literary pages. A day or so ago I commented on the work of Mr. Heywood Broun in a column I conduct on a country newspaper, and immediately thereafter I was stopped on the streets by several of the townspeople, who discussed Broun with me. They read his column and his reviews and liked him. They also read "The Conning Tower" and the gardens of verses offered therein. Some of them go so far as to read Deems Taylor's talk about the music world. The sophisticates hereabout keep as close tab on the movement in the theatre district as do the smartest of New Yorkers. Then when they take their annual pilgrimage to the city they march down Broadway with a most supercilious air and are thoroughly entertained.

CHALLENGE to infidelity by a Tar-Heel Bishop Manning, from the *Charlotte Leader*:

If the reports concerning Rev. Davis' remarks to the Brotherhood Class of the Congregational church are correct—namely "The Book of Jonah and the story of the great fish is but a myth, not worthy of credence"—as a preacher of the word of God and a minister of Christ, and pastor over a Bible-believing congregation, I take exception to such statement, and herewith challenge Rev. Davis to a public debate; time and place at his convenience.

This undoubtedly would prove more interesting than his movie show, and perchance some people might learn a little more about the reliability and authority of the Bible.

Yours respectfully,

JOHN ZUIDERHOOK,
Pastor Gospel Tabernacle.

OTTAWA

THE Rev. David Ness, of Glasgow, past president of the Imperial Orange Council of the World, in an address to Orangemen at Ottawa, as reported by the *Ottawa Citizen*:

There is no story more interesting in the Old Testament than the story of the landing of Prince William of Orange.

PENNSYLVANIA

IDEAL of Service behind the recent military Vice Crusade in Philadelphia, as reported

by the war correspondent of the *Scripps-Howard* newspapers:

Philadelphia politicians ask why Mayor Kendrick put his head into this sort of a moral noose. The best answer they can give themselves is that he is looking beyond Philadelphia toward the governor's chair in Harrisburg and is willing to ditch the organization for the time being to win the rest of the State. Another and less flattering theory propounded out of the corners of their mouths is the suggestion that, after all, the inside organization men can sacrifice the perquisites of the police department so long as other departments are not interfered with. They have in mind Philadelphia's big construction program, running into many millions of dollars.

TEXAS

FROM the code of regulations for the Woman's Building at the University of Texas:

The young ladies will be expected to consult invariably with the Director before making arrangements for going to entertainments or places of recreation; to regulate their conduct according to her decision, and to return promptly after night entertainments. Sitting on the steps or lingering about the door with escorts will be considered a violation of propriety.

In conformity with the expressed wish of the Board of Regents, gentlemen visitors can be received on the first floor only.

Each young lady is requested to procure for her bedroom windows sash curtains, which must be kept down at all times. At night, as long as the room lights are burning, the blinds must be down and closed.

Negligeé costumes must not be worn on the first floor at any time.

FOLLOW-UP letter employed upon ungrateful patients by a medical man of Paige, Texas:

NOTICE!

I expect a prompt settlement of all accounts due me.

If not possible to settle in cash, any of the following named articles will be acceptable, viz:

Cotton Seed, Chickens, Ducks, Geese, Turkeys, Billy Goats, Live Cat Fish over 1 lb. each, Bull Dogs, Registered Bird Dogs, Live Wild Cats, Poland China Hogs, Skunk Hides (dry), Deer Hides, Shot Guns, Cedar Posts, Watches, Gold Teeth, Diamonds, Cream Checks, Pine Trees (2 ft. in diameter x 30 ft. long), Automobiles new or second hand, Peanuts, Black Eyed Peas, Liberty Bonds, Land Notes, Bacon, Lard, Country Hams, Clean Goose Feathers, Soft Shell Turtles over 5 lbs. each. Anything that can be sold for cash legally.

I need the money.

EVERY SCIENCE AN EXACT SCIENCE

BY VILHJALMUR STEFANSSON

It is said that Bacon considered all knowledge his province. But the sciences of today are so many and complex that a single Baconian view of them is no longer possible, and perversions of thought and action result because our intellectual horizon has been narrowed to a part of the field. From a realization of this have come various attempts to co-ordinate the sciences to permit a unifying view of the whole. The French philosopher, Comte, made one of these a century ago in his Positive Philosophy. There have been many since.

But if we pause to state clearly the case against the standardization of knowledge, the essential absurdity becomes so patent that we have to recall the numerous failures to convince ourselves that anyone was ever foolish enough even to try it.

Consider for instance the physiology of the human skin or the composition of a dust nebula. In these fields, among others, the accepted facts of a dozen years ago have become the error and folklore of today. You standardize knowledge, and while you are at the job the knowledge changes. Long before the thing can be adequately done it has ceased being worth doing at all.

Then why are we continually attempting this hopeless task? Partly, let us say, from irrepressible human optimism, which leads us to think that any desirable thing is possible. Partly, also, because of unclear analogizing from fields that seem related but are not. One of these analogies is from business. If you have on hand, on July 1st, a pair of socks, you will have them still on hand on August 1st, or else cash in your

till to correspond, assuming honest and successful management. But, in spite of unlimited honesty and efficiency, you have no guarantee that an idea on hand on July 1st may not have been simply removed by August 1st without any equivalent remaining on hand. You may have discovered that month, for instance, reasonable assurance that the moon is *not* made of green cheese, without being able to get any clear idea as to what it *is* made of.

The reader may here jump at the conclusion that we are arriving at a philosophy of pessimistic hopelessness. That is not the way of the true philosopher. His ideal is the *tabula rasa*. He sweeps away the systems of others, that he may build his own on a smooth foundation.

Realizing simultaneously the insatiable craving of the human mind for order and the impossibility of bringing order into the chaos of knowledge, we appear to be faced with a dilemma no less distressing than insoluble. But on looking deeper we find the dilemma apparent only. This will become clear when we consider the essential nature of knowledge.

The thoughtless among us may speak, for instance, of a red cow, and naïvely imagine we could prove our point with the testimony of a witness or two. But the philosophers have long ago made it clear that a cow would not be red but for the presence of someone to whom it looks red. Having established that point, the deeper of the philosophers go on to prove that the cow would not only not be red, but would not even exist, were it not for the presence of someone who thinks he sees a cow. In our argument the position is even

stronger than this, for we have two lines of defense. First, we agree with the philosopher that you cannot prove of any given cow that it is red, or even that it exists at all; secondly, we insist that an idea is so much less stable than a cow that even were the philosophers wrong about the cow not being red they might easily be right about an idea not being right, or not existing. Take an example. The philosophers of the Middle Ages demonstrated both that the earth did not exist and also that it was flat. Today they are still arguing about whether the world exists, but they no longer dispute about whether it is flat. This shows the greater lasting power of a real thing (whether it exists or not, for that point has not yet been settled) as compared with an idea, which may not only not exist but may also be wrong even if it does exist.

II

We have now come in our discussion to the point where we see the absurdity of supposing ourselves to have any knowledge, as knowledge is ordinarily defined—or at least we would have come to that point but for lack of space which prevents us from making the subject really clear. However, it doesn't matter from a practical point of view whether you have followed this philosophical reasoning. Perhaps you are not a philosopher. In that case, and in the homely phrase of the day, I ask you, what's the good of an Englishman's learning first that all Americans speak through their noses and secondly why they do so, when he has to find out eventually that they do not? What's the good, again, of knowing that central Australia is a desert and that certain principles of physiography make it so, when you may have to listen to an afterdinner speech by some scientific traveler telling that it is not a desert?

Such things do not always go in triplets of (1) so it is, (2) why it is, and (3) it is not—but that is a common order.

The reader may here protest that we are not getting much nearer our promised emancipation from the dilemma between our passion for system and the impossibility of systematizing knowledge. We have hinted above that the solution lies in finding a new basis for knowledge, and this we now proceed to do.

So long as you believe in them, the nasality of American speech, and the desert nature of central Australia are fragments of knowledge capable of being arranged in a system. The trouble comes when you find them out, as it were—discover that they are "untrue." This gives the solution of our problem. We must have knowledge that is incapable of being contradicted. On first thought this seems impossible, but on second thought we realize that such facts do exist in the domain of mathematics. Two and two make four.

But why do two and two make four? Obviously because we have agreed that four is the name for the sum of two and two. That principle has been applied in mathematics to such advantage that it is rightly called the science of sciences, and this is the principle which, now at length, we propose to apply to all knowledge. Through it every science will become a pure science and all knowledge as open to systematization as mathematics.

The trouble with all facts outside the field of mathematics has been inherent in the method of gathering information. We call these methods *observation* and *experiment*, and have even been proud of them—not realizing their clumsy nature, the unreliability of the findings, the transient character of the best of them, and the essential hopelessness of classifying the results and thus gratifying the passion of the human intellect for order and symmetry in the universe.

Take an example. A man comes from out-of-doors with the report that there is a red cow in the front yard. Neglecting for the moment the philosophical aspect of the case—as to whether the cow would be red if there were no one to whom she

seemed red, and also the more fundamental problem of whether there would have been any cow at all if no one had gone out to look—neglecting, as I say, the deeper aspects of the case, we are confronted with numerous other sources of error. The observer may have confused the sex of the animal. Perhaps it was an ox. Or if not the sex, the age may have been misjudged, and it may have been a heifer. The man may have been color-blind, and the cow (wholly apart from the philosophical aspect) may not have been red. And even if it was a red cow, the dog may have seen her the instant our observer turned his back, and by the time he told us she was in the front yard, she may in reality have been vanishing in a cloud of dust down the road.

The trouble lies evidently in our clumsy system of observing and reporting. This difficulty has been obviated in the science of mathematics. A square is, not by observation but by definition, a four-sided figure with equal sides and equal angles. No one has denied that and no one can, for the simple reason that we have all agreed in advance that we will never deny it. Nay more, we have agreed that if anyone says that a square has three or five sides we will all reply in chorus: "If it has three or five sides it is not a square!" That disposes of the matter forever.

Why not agree similarly on the attributes of a front yard?—making it true by definition that, among other things, it contains a red cow. Then if anyone asserts, for reasons of philosophy, color-blindness or the officiousness of dogs, that there is no red cow in the yard, we can reply, as in the case of the squares, "If it does not contain a red cow, it is not a front yard!"

III

The author feels at this point a doubtless unwarranted concern that he is not being taken seriously. Or perhaps the plan proposed is not considered practical. But the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The

thing has been tried, and successfully—not in the systematic way now proposed, but sporadically. Some instances are well known and convincing.

Take the assertion that a Christian is a good man. If you attempt to deny this on the ground that Jones, a deacon in the church, ran off with some public funds, your stricture is at once shown to have been absurd by the simple reply: "If Jones was a thief, he was *not* a Christian." A Christian is, not by observation but by definition, a good man; if you prove that a certain man was not good you merely show that he was not a Christian. Thus we have established once and forever the fact that a Christian is a good man. It is like a square having four sides.

But if someone asserts that a Bolshevik, a Republican or a chemist is a good man, you can soon confute him; for the members of these classes have neglected to define themselves as good. Thus their attributes have to be determined by observation and experiment (after you have first run the gauntlet of the philosophers who ask whether the Bolsheviks could be good without the presence of someone who considers them good, and further whether any Bolsheviks would exist at all but for certain people who think they exist). It is highly probable that evidence could be brought against almost any given Bolshevik and even some Republicans to show that they are not good men. At any rate we have here no such clarity of issue as in things that are true by definition—as the four-sidedness of a square or the goodness of a Christian.

Through some experience of arguing this case in the abstract I have learned that its essential reasonableness can best be established from concrete examples. Let us, then, take cases at random from various fields of knowledge.

Consider first the ostriches of Africa. These birds have been studied in the wild by sportsmen and zoölogists, and as domestic animals by husbandmen who tend them in flocks like sheep. There are accord-

ingly thousands of printed pages in our libraries giving what purports to be information upon their habits. Besides being indefinite and in many ways otherwise faulty, this alleged information is in part contradictory.

Having studied the bird of Africa, let us turn next to the ostrich of literature, philosophy and morals. Instead of the confusion in the case of the ostrich of zoölogy, we have clarity and precision. This is because the ostrich of literature exists by definition only. He is a bird that hides his head when frightened. You may too precipitately object that men would not accept universally this definition of the ostrich of literature if it did not fit also the zoölogical ostrich. The answer is that the definition has never received any support from zoölogists, hunters or the owners of the domesticated birds and yet it has been accepted universally throughout Europe since Pliny's time (about 50 B. C.). It has survived all attacks from science and from the bigoted common-sense of those who did not recognize its true nature. Like the definition of a four-sided square or a good Christian, it has survived because it was useful. Can you imagine any real attribute more instructive than the head-burying of the ostrich-by-definition? As a text for moralists, as an epithet that politicians use for their opponents, as a figure of speech generally, what could serve as well? Our literature is richer, our vocabulary more picturesque through this beneficent bird of hypothesis. He has many inherent advantages that no real bird could have. Since his habits are defined we need not waste time studying him first hand nor in trying to adjudicate at second hand between books about him that disagree. Since he never existed as a beast he is in no danger of the extinction that is said to threaten the lion and swan.

Consider next what trouble we should get into if we did not have the literary ostrich and wanted to convey picturesquely the idea of that sort of wilful blindness from which we ourselves never suffer, but

which curiously afflicts our opponents. In pursuit of suitable analogy we might vainly canvass the whole animal kingdom. The ostrich-by-definition is, therefore, not only less trouble to deal with than a real bird; he is actually more useful and instructive than any real bird or beast. When we consider how often he has been used in sermon and precept we must admit that this model creature has contributed substantially not only to the entertainment and instruction of nations, but also to the morality and general goodness of the world.

The ostrich is but one of several useful birds of definition. But we must be careful not to confuse these with real birds or their value is lessened. An example is the stork that brings babies. By a confusion of thought which identifies this stork with real storks, and through the pernicious birth-control propaganda which insists on rationalizing everything, this stork has ceased to be useful except in conversation with children, in the symbolism of the movie, and in the picture post-card industry.

The wolves of literature are among the most picturesque and useful of our definitions. Zoölogical wolves go in pairs or families, never above a dozen. It is obvious how inadequate this would be for modern movie purposes, where they should run in packs of scores or hundreds. Even in a novel or short story of Siberia or Canada you need packs large enough for the hero to kill fifteen or twenty, with enough left over to eat, or to be about to eat, his sweetheart. This is easily accomplished by employing a wolf of the general type we advocate—having no relation to the so-called realities but possessing by definition all the required characteristics (habit of running in packs of any desired size, willingness to eat, or attempt to eat, the heroine, etc.).

Another useful definition has long been that of Arctic, Canadian and Siberian cold. The danger and disadvantage of confusing this hypothetical with a so-called real

climate are best seen if we compare the facility with which people who have never been in these countries use the weather in conversation, speeches and books, and contrast that facility with the awkwardness of travelers and natives. An example is a story by Tolstoi. Great as he was, he failed to realize the advantage in simplicity and vividness of postulating that Siberia is always cold, and actually allowed himself to be led into the artistic blunder of having the convicts in one of his novels die of sunstroke. An acquaintance of mine was filming this story. He realized the pictorial ease of "putting over" drifting snow as compared with heat waves—the snow could be managed with confetti and an aeroplane propeller, but how would one photograph heat waves? But he realized still more clearly that the public is wedded to the defined, as opposed to the "real," climate of Siberia and did what Tolstoi would have done in the first place had he lived in London—changed the scene from Summer to Winter and then froze to death as many convicts as the picture required.

IV

These few examples from among many will suffice to show not only that the method of knowledge-by-definition is and long has been in standard use, but also that it has the advantages of being easily grasped, picturesque and of a higher average moral value than the so-called "real" knowledge. It is inherent in the genesis and nature of defined facts that they can be made picturesque in proportion to the ingenuity of the one who defines them, and as moral as that one desires. This is a striking advantage over empirical knowledge, which cannot always be relied on to support the fashion of the time or even the moral system of the community. It is from this last point of view that there has grown up in many countries of recent years a profound distrust of "facts" and the theories deduced from them. In En-

gland they are dealt with by the simple and adequate way of paying little attention to the exposition of "new" things. In the United States it has been found that the public listens even to the newest views, and sometimes actually wants to act upon them. This has necessitated the expedient of passing laws prescribing what may and may not be advocated and believed. These laws are a step in the right direction, but inadequate because they do not have back of them any but specific moral considerations. Few people as yet realize the general reasons of expediency and broad sanity that lie back of the scheme we are here proposing.

Let us consider next a sample or two of knowledge-by-definition that could well be added to our present stock. Just as artificial tongues are built upon spoken tongues but avoid their mistakes, so may we conveniently base our knowledge-by-definition, or absolute knowledge, on what is already believed by some. Assume, for instance, that all Irishmen are peasants holding land by insecure tenure from grasping landlords, that each has a pig under his bed, that everyone carries shillalahs, that kissing the blarney stone is the chief national occupation. Having agreed on these things, we could teach them in the schools of all countries. We should then presently all agree (on the basis of common facts) as to what our attitude toward Ireland should be and the troublesome Irish Question would disappear from politics and history. Think, too, what a charm the new system would lend to travel in Ireland! So soon as you landed you would note the rarity or absence of all the things you had expected. You would meet surprise after surprise, which would not only delight you at the time but would give you material for endless letters home and for endless stories to tell when you got back. Thus would be built up an increasing tourist traffic, a source of revenue to Ireland itself and to the shipping and tourist companies of the various nations.

You may think such tourists, on coming home, would upset our system of facts-by-definition about Ireland. Not if that system is once thoroughly established. Consider in that relation the Greek pronouncement that at any time of year it becomes colder the farther North you go. North America is in language and civilization a homogeneous country in which one might think knowledge would therefore spread rapidly, and in which Atlanta, Richmond, New York and Montreal are and have been for a century large and well-known cities that are by observation about equally hot in July. Yet there is even today practically unanimous adherence in all these cities to the Greek definition ("the farther North the colder at any time of year") and each city believes those farther South to be hotter and those farther North to be colder, though thousands of travelers for a hundred years have found it to be uniformly otherwise. The ostrich with his head in the sand has survived two thousand years and is still going strong. No human being can retain oil, but the hypothetical Eskimo drinks it by the flagon in our books and belief and is none the worse for it. Then why should not all the world forever believe that every

Irishman has a pig under his bed? All parties would benefit. It would be only the hypothetical Irishman that has the pig and we could by hypothesis arrange that he should thoroughly enjoy it. The real Irishman would get the benefit of the increased tourist trade and surely he ought to be grateful. The tourist would make facile discovery of the non-existence of the pig; that would please him and interest all his friends forever after as a sort of occult knowledge, like knowing privately that Indian fakirs are really no more clever than our conjurers, a pleasing secret now possessed and highly valued by many without detriment to the fakirs or to those who prefer to say they have seen them do marvels. Thus would everyone be the gainer.

V

It is obvious we could proceed along these lines to the development of a whole new system of thought and education. But we pause satisfied with having presented the germ of the idea. Once the point of view is attained, we feel sure the plan will develop in the reader's mind into a coherent philosophy helpful in solving the most difficult problems.

THE TWO TAFTS

BY CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON

We have two Tafts, dear,
Two, and yet the same.—ROBERT BUCHANAN
forty years later.

IF WE hadn't, there would be no amiable Chief Justice expanding under the glow of newspaper approval, or, at worst, no more derided than other members of the Federal bench; there would be only the blundering politician who was hurled out of office by the greatest revolt his party had ever known, one that must have consoled the souls of Grant and even Blaine. The queer thing is that all his life Taft had wanted to be a judge, not a politician. Well, circumstances, in the form of Republican votes, as he himself would say, for he has a sense of humor and is honest with himself, decided that his ambition should be fulfilled at last, and there he is on the bench. If ever, on dull days, he hankers secretly for the fleshpots of politics, then he blunders again, for in politics Taft was ever all thumbs.

Taft the blunderer! It seems a strange epitaph for a President and Chief Justice of the United States; yet it is true, at least, of the politician and tells the story of his fall. The energy in him, that made him survive it, was of the judicial kind—and let no man doubt that there *is* judicial energy! Judicial history, in fact, is full of fists pounded on the table, including the Taft fist, which struck a table on the other side of which sat Medill McCormick. In nearly every case the pounding was a blunder, and meant the oversetting of the court, the judge, or, in the long run, the nation; but it must be observed that in the Taft-McCormick case the blow fell after Taft had left the bench and before he re-

turned to it. Therefore, as a blunder, it belongs, like all Taft's blunders, to the political phase of him, not to the judicial. It was merely another proof of his essential sagacity when he used to say, "It's good of you, Theodore, but I'd rather be a judge." It would be going too far, perhaps, to say that that fist-pounding in 1909 turned the Middle West into the Democratic column in 1910 and elected Wilson in 1912, because no one thing did that; but the blunder which it symbolized did the trick, and more too. For example, it set Hiram Johnson at Coolidge's heels today.

In the era of his historic blunders Secretary and President Taft was a fat man; today, treading the primrose majority path of the Supreme Court he is only the size of every tall man. There was always something that gave promise of that reduction. He was never gross, even when he weighed three hundred pounds. He was always light on his feet; he liked to dance, and the girls said with surprise that he was a lovely waltzer; you did not hear the sound of his coming, as you did the sound of Billy Mason's. His pet amusement was skipping around the country in automobiles and Pullmans and off it in ships. Now he is no longer fat—not nearly so fat, indeed, as most other men of his height. But since Error dies only gradually, paragraphs and editorial writers will go on until the end of time, or of Taft, describing him as a second Daniel Lambert, just as they used to ascribe Roosevelt's misdeeds to the enthusiasm of youth long after he had joined, as he phrased it, the grandfather class.

II

But about those blunders, the celebrated blunders of the political Taft. First, it should be explained that politics was thrust upon him as an Ohio boy and the son of a man so deep plunged in the science as to be himself a Cabinet Minister, Judge Lorenzo Taft. Lanky and yet fat, young William Howard was mixing in politics before he was of age, and even encountered the majesty of the law for dealing pugilistically with a hostile partisan who made unseemly remarks about Judge Lorenzo. (He got out of it, they say, because the committing magistrate was of the Taft faction.) The judge interrogated the youth concerning his ambitions, and found to his sorrow that they lay toward the law rather than toward politics. Some minor judgeships therefore came his way, but in Ohio a judgeship is ever intricately mixed with politics, and so the two Tafts in one just naturally couldn't help running along together.

But gradually the judicial Taft came uppermost, and the judicial Taft, as judges go among us, is a good one—maybe no John Marshall, but that kind of talk tires me. There has been just one John Marshall in the whole world in the last hundred and fifty years. Those who know not what they speak of talk grandly of the dead days of Marshall, Story, Chase, and Kent, apparently unaware that those giants belonged to different eras and places, that Story's greatest fame was won elsewhere than on the Supreme Bench, that Kent is chiefly remembered in his capacity as a State judge, that Marshall was a builder of the Union and that Taney, whom it is heresy to mention at all, was the only other early judge actually in his class. Who knows that Chase was the anonymous plotter whom Drinkwater introduces in his play of "Abraham Lincoln" under an assumed name? Taft is as good a Chief Justice as the last decades have seen, for they are decades that have not required the talents of a Marshall any

more than they have required the talents of a Samuel Adams or a Jefferson.

So, it being seen that Taft was a good judge, he was sent out to the Philippines, where he governed apparently wisely. His duties were quasi-judicial, and he came home with much kudos and became Secretary of War. In that office he also won kudos by doing just what the President, Roosevelt by name, wanted him to do. It is curious that both Roosevelt and Wilson used to require their Cabinets to do just what they, the Presidents, wanted; and that T. R.'s Cabinets used to find great joy in the same—even such dissimilar characters as John Hay, a second Van Bibber, and James R. Garfield, a John Drew in real life—whereas almost all the members of Wilson's Cabinets made mouths over it and mainly resigned, from Crown Prince McAdoo to Garrison and Lansing. It wasn't because Wilson wanted them to do anything disgraceful, either. If Roosevelt had asked them they would probably have done it.

The rest of our hero's history is an open book. In opening it people generally point to the fact that when he ran for re-election in 1912 he carried but two States, Utah and Vermont. Considering that the American public was off on one of its periodical and unreasoning jaunts of hate that Autumn, I regard this as quite an achievement, and should be disposed to compliment Utah and Vermont if it were not that the Mormon machine and not reason pulled Utah through and that it's a capital offense to vote a third party ticket in Vermont. People elsewhere used language about Taft in that campaign that they would have been ashamed to use about the man who shot Petrosino. After the election some of them noticed that after all he was a human being, and said so. This led some newspapers to say that there was a visible reaction in favor of Taft. I was in New Haven during the following Spring, 1913, and mentioned this to Taft himself, with the design of cheering him up.

"Well," said he, with that sterling sense

which ever characterizes him when he is out of office, "you may have noticed that some 350,000 upright Republicans voted for me, even though I did run third. Now, Thompson, whenever I hear that somebody is visibly reacting toward me, I have a suspicion, I know not whence it comes, that the speaker is simply one of that upright and intelligent 350,000."

And as the same thought had passed through my own mind pianissimo before I spoke, I forebore to deny him; the more as he wore a judicial look, and pulled the cat's tail.

III

That general dislike of Taft, which seems so queer a thing when we look back upon it, and which was nowhere so strong as in his own party, rested upon the fact that "he cannot ope his mouth but out there flies a blunder." Often his blunders in those days were not blunders *per se*, but only blunders for a President. For instance, toward the close of his term a reporter asked him, as he got off his train somewhere, what would be the end or outlook of the labor situation, troubled then as now. Mechanically the President answered, as anybody but a President might have answered, "God knows!" This was the champion blunder of his administration. It flew over the United States, was reiterated and twisted, and became the text for a thousand indignant speeches. Yet anyone else might have said it without raising a ripple—save perhaps of approval. Perhaps, now that he is Chief Justice, Taft himself could say it with impunity. But it was one of the obvious, indiscreet things that a President just must *not* say.

He never could learn this difference between a President and a private person. He was for the Payne-Aldrich tariff bill, no doubt because it came from that wing of the party with which he had always been identified. This was bad enough, since the other wing was going to be in control of the party in the next congressional and presidential elections. But that was not

enough for Taft. The Payne-Aldrich tariff muddle was especially unpopular in the Middle West, but the disfavor with which the Middle West regarded it was applause compared with the sentiments which it engendered in the Northwest, and the Northwest might almost be counted as favorable to it compared with the sentiments it inspired in Minnesota. Speaking in favor of it was one of the few things for which a man might legally be lynched there, and the particular town in the State which disliked it most was Winona. Consequently, with unerring skill, when Taft went on his speaking tour in 1909, he chose Winona as the place in which to deliver his eulogy of it. The reaction throughout Minnesota, the Northwest, the Middle West and the United States came in the form of a reverberating roar. The Rocky Mountains stood on their heads, the Great Lakes turned inside out, and the Sierras danced like the hills of Scripture. Even the National Committee saw that something must be done, and so it hastily advised the President to say something that would calm the mountains down and restore the Mississippi to its bed. Taft hurriedly said it; and what do you think he said? What might have been expected. He said he had "dashed off the Winona speech hurriedly between stations!"

Now, you or I might say that, but the President of the United States is supposed to think thunderously, and his utterances are reckoned as revelations of God. Wilson loosed his "too proud to fight" aphorism in a moment of exaltation before he came to realize that fact. The greatness of Roosevelt largely consisted in the fact that although he appeared to speak impulsively, he actually never uttered a word publicly without having before him a mental vision of how it would look in type. "Makes up his speeches between stations, does he?" yelled the infuriated populace. "Is that the sort of President we've got? We've made up our minds how to vote!"

When Roosevelt started after his scalp

in 1912, Taft at first refused to take the stump against him. But as State after State loped into the Roosevelt camp, honking and tom-tomming—and he carried every one in which there was a presidential primary—the urging of Taft's friends led him finally to defend himself, and he fell upon the job. But he felt that such an unusual procedure on the part of a President needed explanation, and so, according to his nature, he gave the worst possible one. "Even a rat will fight when driven into a corner," he said, gloomily—and thus went the last chance he had of getting even a look-in in any presidential primary State! All the Republicans who could vote voted for Roosevelt, save only that gnarled knot up in Wisconsin which LaFollette never takes out of his pocket.

But how did Roosevelt happen to be against Taft? That was some more of Taft's statesmanship. The Lord, to save him, should have created him mute. Roosevelt had made Taft President. The convention which started the business wanted to renominate Roosevelt himself, and so did the party. For a year before the convention Roosevelt was engaged in strangling the Rooseveltters. Whenever he heard that a State boss, such as John G. Capers of South Carolina, or Cecil A. Lyon of Texas, was going to bring a Roosevelt delegation to the convention, he would send for that misguided chief and say to him, "Let your delegation be for Taft, Cassio, or never more be officer of mine!" It was a bound and gagged convention, with Roosevelt's friend, Henry Cabot Lodge, running it—Lodge was at the end of a telegraph wire; the other end ran into the White House. At the White House end stood William J. Lee, the quickest telegraph operator in Washington. It was his duty to let Roosevelt know when the stampedeers tried to put him over and to take Roosevelt's reply, which was to be an unconditional declination. Lodge was to read it. But Lodge worked the game without recourse to this device. When the Jonathan Bourne rooters started a stampede for Roosevelt, Lodge

began calling the alphabetical roll of delegates. Under cover of the uproar the latter voted for Taft inaudibly, and Georgia was being called before the Roosevelt rooters discovered what was going on. They stopped then, and Taft was nominated.

Having thus crushed all opposition and nominated Taft, Roosevelt carried him through the campaign and got him a majority up to that time unprecedented. After the election Roosevelt expected a word of thanks. He got it, somewhat in this form: "I owe a great deal to you, Theodore, and I want to take this opportunity of saying so." Proper expression by Roosevelt. "Yes," continued Taft, "in thinking over the whole campaign, I am bound to say that I owe more to you than to almost anybody else, *except my brother Charley.*"

I do not mean to say that this astonishing remark alone was what made Roosevelt go off to the Potomac meadows and bite his teeth till the blood came, but it was what started it. The finish was put on the business by what happened to Roosevelt's friends, especially Gifford Pinchot, after Taft was in office. Pinchot hurried across the ocean when Roosevelt emerged from Africa to be the first to tell him of all the things that had befallen Garfield, Loeb, and every other statesman whom Roosevelt had specially recommended. Roosevelt, who at that time still did not want to be nominated again, responded vigorously by announcing that he was a strong supporter of Governor Hughes. The rest is history. Taft was hurt and grieved. He did not know then, and probably does not know now, what he had done to break the friendship of a man whom he highly esteemed and, in his way, almost loved. Nor does he know that, human nature being what it is, nine men out of ten would have done exactly what Roosevelt did, though it may be a fact to be regretted.

IV

Practically all of Taft's bitter experiences in office were thus largely of his uncon-

scious making. He was a good President at the wrong time. He was a far better President than McKinley, Harrison or Hayes, and in the eighties or nineties, where he belonged, he would have been reckoned an intelligent Progressive. As a judge his only fault is one which he shares with the majority of the Federal Bench: he believes a little too strongly in the existing order. It used to be said of District Attorney Jerome that he was a splendid prosecuting officer, except that his mind could not take in the idea that a rich man had done anything wrong. As a President, Taft showed something of the same fault. His pardon of Charles W. Morse, based on pleas and arguments that would never have deceived Roosevelt or Coolidge and might not even have deceived Harding, Wilson or McKinley, is a case in point. He fell too easily for such arguments; it was his blind side. On the bench he shows less of it, and certainly seeks to be impartial, though it

is possible to detect evidences of the old Adam still. It is, indeed, natural that his mind should unconsciously make him favor the old order, just as Justice Brandeis' mind unconsciously puts him in the position of a questioner.

He is thoroughly upright; in fact, the man who would question his honor would be laughed at. Even as a politician he always played square. But he should have gone on the bench early in life and stayed there. His incurable tendency to blunder ruined him as a politician. But, at worst, that tendency injured mainly himself. His blunders were disastrous only to Taft and the Republican Party, which needed a drubbing; whereas Wilson's blunders were disastrous to the United States, to Europe, and to remote communities not yet heard of. Taft's blunders are mainly forgotten. Wilson's will never cease to reverberate until the Resurrection morn.

MANSFIELD PARK AND AMERICA

BY ARTHUR BINGHAM WALKLEY

THE Clarendon Press at Oxford has lately done a fine thing. It has published a great edition of Jane Austen's novels, compared with which all other editions are naught but leather and prunella. The British Museum, old Directories of Bath—as Bath was a good quarter of a century before Mr. Pickwick and Sam Weller rediscovered it—Guides to the Ball-room, carriage-builders' catalogues, and even an early illustrated copy of Mrs. Inchbald's "Lover's Vows," have been ransacked for contemporary prints, fashion-plates and maps to elucidate the text. That text, hitherto remarkably corrupt, has been collated, emended and conjecturally reconstructed by the Clarendon editor, Mr. R. W. Chapman, with the ingenuity of a Bentley restoring the digamma to Homer or of a Verrall restoring common sense to Euripides. In short, an English classical author has at length been honored with an edition which is at once scholarly and, like Frank Churchill's letter to his stepmother, "handsome."

No doubt, these facts will leave what it is the fashion to call with fulsome flattery the English-speaking world comparatively cold. What, in the name of the Bodleian, asked Mr. Augustine Birrell, has the general public to do with literature? But there are Austenites, I suppose, in both hemispheres. Now that Howells is dead, how many are left in America? I hope my question, coming from an Englishman, is not impertinent. I know that there issue from American universities many learned monographs—diploma-pieces, they seem generally to be, theses or exercises for a degree—on far more rec-

ondite English topics than Jane Austen—for example, Coventry mystery plays, minor Caroline poets and the like. And I see that Mr. Harvey Eagleson, of Stanford University, has furnished the Clarendon editor with a tip about "Northanger Abbey." So there, at any rate, is one.

That there were fervent Austenites in America in our grandfathers' generation is clearly established by a letter (printed in "A Memoir of Jane Austen," by her nephew, J. B. Austen Leigh, 1869) to her brother, Sir Francis Austen, from Miss Quincey, "care of the Hon. Mr. Josiah Quincey, Boston, Massachusetts," asking for his sister's autograph, and dated January 6, 1852. "The influence of her genius," wrote Miss Quincey, "is extensively recognized in the American Republic, even by the highest judicial authorities. The late Mr. Chief Justice Marshall, of the Supreme Court of the United States, and his associate, Mr. Justice Story, highly estimated Miss Austen, and to them we owe our introduction to her society. For many years her talents have brightened our daily path, and her name and those of her characters are familiar to us as 'household words.'"

I have no warrant for supposing that the present generation has fallen from grace; indeed, I imagine (writing from a distance, one must speak with caution) that intellectual curiosity in the United States is keener and more catholic than ever. But this is a matter rather of tradition. Somehow, I mentally picture the tribe of Austenites, always "werry fierce," always thirsting for one another's blood over the choice between "Pride and Prejudice," and

"Persuasion" or the relative positions in the comic scale of Mr. Collins and Aunt Norris—I picture this savage tribe more readily in our British woad and skins than in moccasins and feather-dress. I can no more conceive an American reader getting excited about Highbury and Box Hill and Kingston market than I can myself about Appomattox or Old Point Comfort.

The fact is, Jane Austen was one of the most insular of English authors. She was as thorough a stay-at-home as Shakespeare, and her imagination never traveled further from Chawton in Hampshire than Bath or Exeter, on the one hand, and London on the other. That is one of her charms for us today: that she kept so still, that she contemplated only what was under her nose, that her color was so purely local. After all, it was not easy for a spinster lady of limited means to move about in those days. With the bad roads and the difficult traveling, the country towns and villages were far more self-centered than they are now, the squire and the parson more important figures in them, local gossip more violent from confinement, flirting with the militia officers a more regular employment. And where Miss Austen lived, the people of her novels must needs live also. "You are now collecting your people delightfully," she writes to a niece essaying a novel. "Three or four families in a country village is the very thing to work on." It must be as strange for an American to read about the people thus collected in an out-of-the-way village in Hampshire as it is for an Englishman to read about the people in Main Street.

Nor do I think that Miss Austen's mind had any sympathy with the democratic ideal. She was by temperament, like perhaps nine women out of ten, a devotee of the established order, and the established order, as she knew it, was unpromisingly aristocratic. It was, to tell the truth, so far as home affairs were concerned, a rather dreary period in English history. For it was the period of blind

reaction against the French Revolution, the Eldonine period, with its harsh penal laws, its bigoted worship of the *status quo*, its unawakened Church, its unreformed Parliament, its rigid class distinctions. That Miss Austen found this state of thing "all werry capital" I do not assert, but assuredly she never permitted herself to criticize it. Social etiquette in those days forbade ladies to talk politics. It is laid down in "Persuasion" that the concern of the ladies in a country family is restricted to housekeeping, neighbors, dress, dancing and music. In "Northanger Abbey" Henry Tilney's "short disquisition on the state of the nation" was received by the ladies in silence.

With politics, then, tabooed, we shall not be surprised to find that Jane Austen's novels make no comment on international affairs. She never mentions Nelson or Trafalgar (though she had two brothers in the navy) or Bonaparte, though she can record with minute accuracy the real names of a purveyor in High Street, Portsmouth, and a jeweler in Sackville Street, Piccadilly. The more important in world-history anything was, the less she was likely to notice it. It would have been natural, then, for her to ignore the vast continent of North America.

Yet she does mention America, just once, and in a very odd way. It was at the Bertrams' impromptu dance in Chapter XII of "Mansfield Park." Tom Bertram had drawn near Fanny Price, but, it seemed, to talk rather than to dance:

When he had told of his horse, he took a newspaper from the table, and looking over it said in a languid way, "If you want to dance, Fanny, I will stand up with you"—with more than equal civility the offer was declined;—she did not wish to dance. "I am glad of it," said he in a much brisker tone, and throwing down the newspaper again—"for I am tired to death. I only wonder how the good people can keep it up so long. They had need be *all* in love, to find any amusement in such folly—and so they are, I fancy. If you look at them, you may see they are so many couples of lovers—all but Yates and Mrs. Grant—and, between ourselves, she, poor woman, must want a lover as much as any one of them. A desperate dull life hers must be with the doctor," making a sly face as he spoke towards the chair of the latter, who proving, however, to be close at his elbow, made so instantaneous a change

of expression and subject necessary, as Fanny, in spite of everything, could hardly help laughing at. "A strange business, this in America, Dr. Grant! What is your opinion? I always come to you to know what I am to think of public matters."

This is what Homeric commentators would call a remarkable *bapax legomenon*. Jane Austen's single reference to America is in a question hastily invented to hide what had been really said. No doubt Tom Bertram had seen the "strange business" mentioned in the newspaper he had just been looking at.

Now what was this strange business in America? The answer to this question would settle the "dramatic" date of the story of "Mansfield Park." ("Mansfield Park" was actually written between February, 1811, and June, 1813.) I turn for guidance to the Clarendon Editor's note, and what do I find? "It is probably hopeless to seek to identify the 'strange business' in America. Many strange things happened in those years." I call this a shabby evasion of responsibility. It was, surely, the editor's business to seek—or, at least, to compile a list of *all* the strange things that happened in America in those years. I am all the more vexed because I find myself unable to mention *anything*, strange or ordinary, that happened about that time in America. I have a vague idea that there was some little war on then between England and the United States about heavens knows what—I say a little war, because it must have been that by comparison with the big war with Bonaparte that England had on her hands in Europe. I remember a charming neighbor at a dinner some years ago in Washington, who first informed me about that little war; but she emphatically protested against the suggestion that it could have been, even by comparison, little; it was about the biggest and most important war, she held, in the history of the world, and what is more, the British were vanquished in it—"whipped," if I remember rightly, was her own word. She may have mentioned the date of this black page in English

history but, if so, I have forgotten it.

I apologized to her—as I apologize here to the readers of THE AMERICAN MERCURY—for my deplorable ignorance. It is all the fault of our English school-teaching of history; you go through a "period" and then you find yourself next term in another form, which is at an entirely different period; and you may never make up the gap. My gap, unfortunately, occurred in the period, early Nineteenth Century of American history, and these are omissions that can never be repaired in after-life. I can only guess how many Presidents of the United States there were between George Washington and Abraham Lincoln; I never knew their names. I missed them by being moved from the upper fifth to the sixth form. I daresay many American schoolboys have dropped some of their English Kings in much the same way, and I can only hope they were the bad ones. Such is our modern so-called education! *Pauvre et triste humanité!* But it was just as bad in Miss Austen's day, or even worse. The Misses Bertram, daughters to Sir Thomas Bertram, Bart., of Mansfield Park, had only learned their chronological order of the Roman Emperors as low as Severus.

Here then, is a very pretty problem for the American reader. What happened in America in either of the years 1811-12 that the son of an English country squire would be likely to remark upon as a "strange business" and about which it would be natural for him to ask the local parson's opinion? As it was a matter about which there could be two opinions, it can hardly have been an incident in the war—nor is it one of these "whippings" of the English which seemed to give my fair neighbor at Washington so much retrospective satisfaction. More likely, it was a political incident; but it must have had international bearings, for an incident of purely domestic American politics could hardly have interested either English squire's son or parson. I hope that an authoritative solution of the problem will be forthcoming, and communicated to the Editor of the Clarendon Press Jane Austen.

CLINICAL NOTES

BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN AND H. L. MENCKEN

Give a Dog, Etc.—The moony college professors and hard-headed political shy-sters who now run what was formerly the Austrian crownland of Bohemia performed a very evil service for that fair land when they changed its name to Czecho-Slovakia. At one stroke they disposed of all the romantic associations that had hung around the old name for centuries. Bohemia, like Italy, was a name that slipped softly from the tongue, and left a pleasant flavor behind it; to its charm, indeed, far more than to any actual merit in the Bohemians, was due the good repute of the country. Nor was it charming only in English; the German and Swedish Böhmen, the French la Bohème, the Italian Boemia, the Dutch Bohemen and the Danish Böhmen were also charming, and so were the names for the Bohemian: Böhme, Böhmare, Bohemiën, Boemo, Bohemer and Böhmer, not to forget the Spanish Bohemo. Now he is a Czech—a word as foul and unlovely as any of the little four-letter Anglo-Saxon monosyllables that never get into respectable English dictionaries. A Czech, God help us!—and Bohemia is Czecho-Slovakia—in German Tschechoslowakei; in French something still worse! Who could admire a Czech, or dream sentimentally of Czecho-Slovakia? As well admire a Lett or a Serb, or dream of Harisburg, Pa.

Criticism, Again.—It is one of the defects of the critical biology that criticism seeks to account for everything in the work of an artist, to plumb it thoroughly, estimate it and reason it out. In this, criticism often over-reaches itself. There are things in the

work of the true artist, of the man of genius, that he himself cannot account for and reason out, that appear in his work unconsciously, bafflingly, without meditated cause, and they are often the finest things in that work. What is the human soul? No critic knows. What are certain of those elements that comprise the soul of a work of art? No critic can tell. It is not the duty of criticism futilely to explore such mysteries; it is the duty of criticism merely to announce them and venerate them.

Nostalgia.—If it be a crime, then lead me to jail: the fact remains that I long for the gaudy diversion of another war, and hope that it is not too long delayed. The last one provided a show that was precisely to my somewhat florid taste; I emerged from it profoundly thankful to Providence for letting me serve my term in the world in such an era—the most astounding and amusing since that of the Crusades. Now, on rainy days, I find myself pining for its incomparable entertainment. I long for the black, Gothic headlines on the front pages; for the romantic *communiqués* of the French General Staff; for the photographs of German lieutenants feeding Belgian infants into sausage-machines; for the daily bulls and ukases of the eloquent Woodrow, with their uplifting, lascivious phrases; for the speeches by Charlie Schwab on America's cultural debt to France; for the subtle, Italian statecraft of the Hon. William Jennings Bryan; for the great days in War Babies on the curb; for the feverish manufacture of elliptical and rhomboidal shells for the poor Russians; for the yells for help from the sweating Motherland; for the heroic effort of T. R.

to horn into it by fair means or foul; for the tramp, tramp, tramp of scared clerks in Preparedness parades; for the daily bulletins from Plattsburg; for the majestic patriotic passion of Wall Street. I long for the draft and the struggle to get out of it; for the spy hunt and the slacker hunt; for the butchery of the Constitution by Palmer, Burleson and the Supreme Court; for the Liberty Loan drives and the wholesale blackmailing of stenographers, bookkeepers, waiters, yokels; for the gals collecting for the Red Cross; for the rush of consecrated men to enlist in the Y. M. C. A.; for the concentration of dollar-a-year men at Washington, within easy reach of the Treasury; for the patriotic effort of union labor to get a fair share of the loot; for the speeches of the three-minute men in movie parlors; for the thrilling bulletins of the Creel Press Bureau; for the romantic anecdotes about Joffre, Foch, Pershing; for the desperate struggle to save the conscripts from the scarlet woman; for the first dismayed days of Prohibition; for the war speeches of the Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, the Rev. Dr. Henry van Dyke and the rest of the superior clergy; for the departure of the troop-ships; for the enchanting dawn of the Ku Klux Klan, 100% Americanism and the American Legion; for the bawdy stories that came back from France; for the endless French military commissions in their charming uniforms, and the growth of uneasy suspicions among American husbands; for the official movies showing the Kaiser made up as Desperate Desmond and the Crown Prince as a cannibal; for the editorials in the *New York Tribune* and the Russian news of the *New York Times*; for the heroic effort to canonize Woodrow and shove him into the Trinity; for the endeavor of the Senate to get a copy of the Treaty of Versailles from J. P. Morgan & Company; for the chance to pick up Liberty Bonds at 82; for the crash of drums, cymbals and *Blasmusik*, and one band playing "The Star-Spangled Banner" after another; for the first

alarms about Debs, the I. W. W. and the Bolsheviki; for the rush to build wooden ships, and the \$20 a day jobs in the shipyards; for the attempt to put down Hearst; for the pleas of Otto Kahn, Adolph Ochs, Henry Morgenthau and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise for Anglo-Saxon unity; for the bellicosity of the Liberals; for the stampede of parlor Socialists to take the pledge and get under the table; for the high old time that the Aframerican doughboys had among the ladies of France; for the tall talk about self-determination, saving the world for democracy, breaking the heart of humanity; for the airship contracts and the \$800,000,000 that vanished; for the scares about ground glass in bread, strychnine in dill pickles and wireless plants in the halls of *Gesangvereine*; for Barney Baruch, "Hell and Maria" Dawes, Josephus Daniels, Lansing, Admiral Sims, Crown Prince McAdoo, Sergeant York, Newt Baker and all the other heroes of the time, now mainly forgotten; for—

But the list must have an end, though it is really endless. Those were happy, electric days—the dullest of them better than circus day, even than hanging day. I enjoyed them vastly. They sent me to bed in a glow and got me up in the morning with all the eager expectancy of a schoolboy entering a Museum of Anatomy. I say frankly that I hope they will return. I long to see the American Legion, bonus in pocket, marching off to another war.

A Score for the Comstocks.—The Comstocks are at least justified in their contention that the sincerity of an author means nothing if his book is, in their eyes, actionable. Morals aside, the much talked of sincerity of the artist is, as they rightly hold, very largely bosh. The most sincere American author of the last two years against whom the Comstocks proceeded produced a piece of work which, disregarding its morals, was third-rate stuff. The least sincere American author of the last two years against whom they proceeded produced a

piece of work which, again disregarding its morals, was absolutely first-rate. It is further worthy of note that an all-righteous and accurately critical God let the Comstocks get the better of the sincere third-rater and let the insincere first-rater get the better of the Comstocks.

The Tolerance of Age.—The tolerance of age, as opposed to the intolerance of youth, has its genesis less in the experience and maturity of the mind than in a keen sense of age's diminished personal qualities. Youth is sure of itself; it is sure of its strength, its beauty, its ability to tweak the world by the nose, its romantic devil-may-care heart. Age, with its increased wisdom, knows that these rare attributes are no longer its own proud possession. Its tolerance is thus less sympathy for other men than sympathy for itself. It is tolerant because it is mistrustful of itself, and a trifle afraid longer to risk intolerance. Only the strong may be intolerant. Tolerance is a product of the self-perceived inferiority complex of the weak. And age, for all the power of its mind, is weak in all those things that form in combination the basis of the vanity of mortal man.

The Banker and the Artist.—Surely not the least of the numerous metropolitan drolleries is the spectacle frequently provided by the vainglory of those Wall Street bankers who take it upon themselves to invade gatherings of artists and speak their little pieces for the latters' delectation. There is hardly a public meeting, exhibition or banquet of artists that does not vouchsafe the juicy tableau of one banker or another making an address on a subject he understands nothing about to men of a species apart from himself about whom he similarly understands nothing. Artists are artists and bankers are bankers and never the twain shall meet. Yet these bankers not a little impertinently seek to push into a class to which they do not belong and cannot by virtue of lack of

aesthetic sensitiveness and perception ever belong. Invite a banker to speak to an assemblage of artists and he will jump to accept before the envelope is half open. Invite an artist to speak before an assemblage of bankers and he would let out a horse-laugh that could be heard a mile away.

Studies in Boobology: A Survey of Current National Advertising Campaigns. First Series.—

1. Would you like to win the confidence, love, obedience and respect of your child? You can! Remember—no cost—no obligation—simply sign and mail the coupon below.—*Parents Association, Pleasant Hill, Ohio.*

2. No matter what your own particular difficulties are—poor memory, mind wandering, indecision, timidity, nervousness or lack of personality—Pelmanism will show you the way to overcome them. "Scientific Mind Training" is absolutely free. Simply fill out the coupon and mail it today. It costs you nothing, it obligates you to nothing, but it is absolutely sure to show you the way to success and happiness.—*Pelman Institute of America, 2575 Broadway, New York City.*

3. How to acquire a winning personality. How to become a clear, accurate thinker. How to be the master of any situation. Mail this free coupon. Send no money.—*North American Institute, 3601 Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Ill.*

4. How would you like to be a lawyer? To plead cases in court, handle big estates, occupy a position of importance in social, business and public affairs? You can—in two years—through our improved method in teaching by mail.—*American School, Drexel Avenue and 58th Street, Chicago, Ill.*

5. The power of Creative Thought is yours if you want it. This wonderful power can be yours. Send in the Free Lesson coupon today.—*Federal Institute of Psychology, 111 Federal Schools Building, Minneapolis, Minn.*

6. An evening with the greatest orator America has ever known will reveal to you how easily you can acquire a masterly,

persuasive and convincing manner of speaking English—the power of holding interest and making others see things your way. The first ten minutes spent with Col. Robert Ingersoll have convinced thousands how amazingly easy it is to acquire a poised, well-styled way of talking and an elegant polished flow of words. Can you persuade people to do what you want them to do? Do you know the secret of having your speech burn with feeling, flame with conviction? This great Master of Eloquence reveals to you how the magic power of thrilling with words is nothing more or less than a simple knack which is easily acquired. With the power of words, of eloquence, of force, of conviction, of persuasion, at your command, nothing is impossible for you—there is no position, either socially or commercially, that is beyond your reach. Can you afford to be without the works of this great Master? It is not necessary to send a penny in advance. Mail this free coupon now, at once.—*The Ingersoll Publishers, Inc., 3 West 29th Street, New York City.*

7. Want to overcome illness and poverty? You can do it! Send 10 cents for copy of "How to Go Into the Silence," which tells how to use Auto-Suggestion and get the most out of life.—*The Elizabeth Towne Co., Inc., Holyoke, Mass.*

8. Hobart Bradstreet Reveals His Method of Staying Young. The Man Who Declines to Grow Old. Here is his secret: *he keeps his spine a half-inch longer than it ordinarily would measure!* With all sincerity, he says nothing in the whole realm of medicine or specialism can quicker remake, rejuvenate and restore one. It costs nothing to try it. Fill out the coupon now.—*Hobart Bradstreet, 630 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.*

The Nordic Dolichocephalic.—After reading attentively and in trembling the works of Dr. Madison Grant, Dr. Gertrude Atherton, Dr. Lothrop Stoddard and all the other eloquent proponents of the thesis that the dolichocephalic or long-headed

Nordic blond is the only truly human variety of *Homo sapiens* and that the brachycephalic or broad-headed Mediterranean, with his vague smears of Ethiopian blood, is a menace to the Constitution, Protestant Christianity and the American germ-plasm—after putting in two months with such terrifying literature, I happened to take down the volume of the *American Anthropologist* for 1898 and found therein, on page 347, the following startling words by Prof. Aleš Hrdlička, M.D., Sc.D., curator of physical anthropology in the National Museum at Washington, secretary of the committee on anthropology of the National Research Council, and member of a dozen learned societies at home and abroad:

A pure American colored child almost always shows a pronounced dolichocephaly, while the normal white American child will show every variation from a markedly long head to a pronounced brachycephaly.

Epitaph.—To the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the Roosevelt Memorial Association, Inc., each fertile in publicity for its promoters and offering comfortable jobs to their press-agents, now add the Harding Memorial Association. Just what this last proposes to do I don't know. Erect an equestrian statue of the Martyr in Marion, Ohio? Place hand-painted oil paintings of him in all the far-flung halls of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks? Endow a Brigadier General Charles E. Sawyer chair of homeopathy in the Johns Hopkins Medical School? I only hope that it is something bizarre and spectacular, something to arrest the attention and heat up the veneration of the plain people. Otherwise the late gentleman, twenty-ninth President of the United States, threatens to be forgotten before the ivy is green on his tomb. Already, he begins to seem as remote and vague as Garrett A. Hobart, Allen G. Thurman or Gum-Shoe Bill Stone.

At this moment, indeed, his funeral orgies remain more clearly in mind than any act of his own life. Certainly no man

ever passed into the Eternal Vacuum to the tune of more delirious rhetoric. The Associated Press dispatches, printed in all the newspapers during the ghastly progress of the funeral train through that double file of village mayors, newspaper photographers, scared school children and anonymous morons, were not merely eloquent; they were lyrical, maudlin, heart-breaking. They gurgled; they snuffled; they choked and moaned. Who wrote them I don't know; if I did, I'd hire him as Obituary Editor of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, with the rank of archdeacon. I forthwith nominate him for the Pulitzer Prize. A supreme master of bilge. But probably not a very good prophet.

For I can see no evidence whatever for his thesis, maintained *fortissimo* every day while the train rolled on, that Dr. Harding was of immortal calibre, and will go down into history as one of the heroes of *Homo boobiens* in this land of the free. The simple fact is that *Homo boobiens* seemed to take very little interest in him until he fell ill and died, and that even then that interest was rather in his florid obsequies than in the man himself. The vulgar knocked off work, they went out to the railroad yards, they put pennies on the track to be run over by the fatal car, and that was about all. What was there in him, indeed, to set *Homo boobiens* a-frenzy? After Wilson, he seemed almost tongue-tied. After Roosevelt, he seemed only half alive. From first to last, indeed, he was an obscure man, even as President. No great and alarming Cause issued from his fancy. He invented no new and superior Bugaboo. Only once did he ever say anything that attracted attention, and then, I fear, he was laughed at. No one hated him, but no one worshiped him. Even the plain people, I believe, like to find something brilliant in their heroes. Dr. Harding was simply an amiable hand-shaker, a worthy fellow in his Sunday clothes, an estimable noble of the Mystic Shrine.

The editorial writers of the land, apparently unable to acquiesce in the theory

of his greatness that lifted the Associated Press to its impassioned *vers libre*, fell back upon lavish praises of his honesty, as if honesty were rare in Presidents. The selection of this quality, it seems to me, was somewhat unfortunate. As a man, no doubt, Mr. Harding was the soul of honesty, as he was unquestionably the soul of amiability, but when one turns from the man to the politician it quickly becomes obvious that the definition of the term has to be humanely modified. I here allude obliquely to the chief plank in the platform upon which he was preparing to stand for re-election—the plank, to wit, declaring boldly and unequivocally for the Eighteenth Amendment. Is it maintained by anyone that Mr. Harding, personally, was a Prohibitionist by conviction and practice? If so, then it is maintained only by the sort of half-wits who still believe that the Kaiser started the war.

Nay, it was not a frank and candid man who stood on this plank—not even, indeed, a good actor. It was simply a politician of a depressingly familiar and dismaying species. The World Court scheme, I daresay, had sincerer conviction in it, but unluckily it was devoid of sense. The more one read and pondered the speeches in which it was set forth, the more hopelessly one searched for the substance beneath the words. Only a Chautauqua audience, long accustomed to the subtlest varieties of logomachy, could grasp the vision. The practical politicians of the Republican party found it too vague and so it got itself quietly shelved, to remain forgotten until Dr. Coolidge took it down again. First place was then taken by Prohibition, an old ghost in a new falseface. There was nothing else. The news that prosperity had been restored found the farmers plastered with mortgages and sending all sorts of preposterous dervishes from the Bad Lands to Washington. The foreign policy of the Feather Duster had irritated and disgusted both allies and foes, and piled up fresh enmities

in Russia and Latin America. No war loot had been recovered; taxes had not been reduced; Daugherty still smelled like a tannery.

The wonder is, indeed, that a man so vastly lacking in the most elemental force and originality, a man so pathetically unfitted for the appallingly serious business that confronts the head of a great state, should ever have become President. It was, true enough, largely an accident, but nevertheless it was an accident that certainly did not do much violence to the ordinary political probabilities. The same machinery may throw up another such pale and incoherent Cæsar, and one, indeed, much worse. And, having thrown him up, it may keep him in office eight years, while things drift on to confusion worse and worse confounded, and the public policy of a great and puissant land is reduced to a mere series of empty phrases.

The gradual extension of democracy, by the direct primary, the widening of the franchise and other such devices will probably make it quite impossible, in the long run, for any man of genuine capacity, and particularly for any man of genuine dignity, to get into the White House. Only two varieties of statesmen will be in the running: first, unconscionable demagogues of the Roosevelt kidney, eager to embrace any buncombe that will inflame the proletariat, and secondly, inarticulate vacuums of the Harding-Coolidge type, too poor in ideas to be capable of arousing any serious opposition. Experience will prove that the latter are the safer, at least in ordinary times, and so it is likely that they will tend to be elevated oftener than the former. At the present moment, indeed, each of the great parties is preparing to nominate a safe and sane candidate—that is, a candidate who has never offended anybody, and may be trusted to stick to the same program hereafter. Both are afraid of all their more positive and forthright leaders. Both are especially afraid of such of their leaders as are obviously most competent by nature and experience to be

head of the state, and most likely to discharge the office with courage and sagacity.

That the late lamented gentleman belonged to the second of these classes must be plain to everyone. He received the Republican nomination because all the more robust aspirants within his party had fought one another to a dogfall—because the need was manifest, if the expected victory was to be won, to agree upon a candidate who had no passions, no ideas and no enemies. And he was elected because the plain people were tired of a President from whom ideas radiated like quills from the fretful porcupine—because they were tired of being instructed and exhorted, and longed only for the return to normalcy that was promised them. The phrase pained grammarians, but it made votes.

Normalcy duly returned, but it was a stranger in a world no longer normal. Vigorous leadership, with some touch of bold imagination in it, was needed to reorient the nation, and disentangle it from its difficulties within and without. But instead of this vigorous leadership there appeared only a somewhat bewildered willingness, a great but ineffective diligence, an engaging urbanity that got nowhere—in brief, only the talents of a faithful bookkeeper or suburban clergyman. A few expenditures were cut off, but taxes remained high. The wicked were threatened, but continued to flourish. An idea was borrowed from a long-haired prophet out of the desert, got itself mellowed by hard-boiled men behind the door, and developed in the end into an international entanglement that may one day bring down a national disaster.

Such was the reign of the Hon. Warren G. Harding, of Marion, Ohio. It slides into the shades with the reigns of Millard G. Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, Benjamin Harrison. It will probably mark, in the histories, a transition between the old traditions that blew up in 1917, and the new ways that none of us, today, knows the direction of. . . . The Associated Press

professor of bathos had it that the deceased was done to death by overwork—a martyr to the complex and cruel demands of his high office. Perhaps. It was no place for an amiable and easy-going man, loving friendly contacts and a casual habit. But that he was engaged upon the duties of his high office at the moment he collapsed is certainly not an historical fact. He had actually put off the duties of his high office, and was engaged violently upon a canvass for renomination and re-election.

Form.—Too much emphasis, it seems to me, is laid by the critics upon form. Perfection of form is hardly the sine qua non of fine art. The old dime novel had almost perfect form; Joseph Conrad has none, or at best very little, in the currently accepted sense. Great art is often as formless as inferior art is sleek in form.

Reflections of a Bachelor of Forty.—1. Lucky the woman who can conceal her greatest and most secret defect from her rival.

2. It is not man's tragedy that his body grows old, but that his mind does. The arteries of happiness inevitably harden with the years. Wisdom and experience never yet have brought back the happiness of youth.

3. For a reason I have never been able to make out, General George B. McClellan has always seemed to me to be one of the most romantic figures of the Civil War.

4. When a man looks at a photograph of himself as a little boy, he sees there less himself than one who seems his own child.

Artistic Triumphs.—"It has taken me three years and it has cost \$1,500,000, but I have at last succeeded in screening the masterpiece of my life!" said the great movie director.

"It has taken me three years and it has cost me my eyesight, but I have at last succeeded in engraving the entire Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin!" said the hermit of the Pyrenees.

From the Waste-Basket of a Critic.—1. It is significant that no New Englander has

ever been able to write a beautiful love story.

2. The English artist is much more sensitive to criticism than the American. With negligible exception, the Englishman is extremely touchy when criticism steps upon his toes. Equally with negligible exception, the American gives the impression of not caring a continental.

3. Criticism in America has always suffered from ward politics.

4. Great art consists in the effort to express as completely as possible an inexpressible emotion.

The Greenwich Village Ball.—A ball is commonly accepted to be a large party devoted to dancing—but not any longer by anyone who has been to one in Greenwich Village. A ball in Greenwich Village is devoted solely and entirely to watching one young man baste another young man in the nose for venturing the opinion that former young man's green necktie is blue when the former young man insists that it is a rich maroon, to keeping one's self from being pushed headlong down the flight of stairs by the two excited officers of the law stationed on the job for the express purpose of seeing to it that no one is pushed headlong down the flight of stairs, and to hypnotizing one's imagination into believing that Miss Selma Goldfarb, stenographer in the Paramount Underwear Knitting Mills who is dressed up in pink and yellow cheesecloth, is Cleopatra of the Nile.

In the flush of the season, there is a ball in Greenwich Village almost every night. Whenever a couple of young men in the Village have to get the money to pay their rent right away or be booted out into the street, they borrow a few dollars from one of the waiters over at the Brevoort, have circulars printed on gilt paper announcing "The Gala Fête of the Nymphs and Satyrs," persuade some friendly newspaper reporter to print a piece saying that the whole "Follies" chorus will be on deck in the nude, and then lay back until the boobs duly appear on the scene at three dollars the boob. During the last month

exactly nineteen balls have been held in Greenwich Village at which the whole "Follies" chorus was billed to appear in birthday clothes and at which the only person connected with the "Follies" who showed up even once was Florenz Ziegfeld fully dressed.

The gayety of the usual ball takes place on the dance floor. The gayety of a Greenwich Village ball is confined entirely to the advance advertising matter. This advance advertising matter is rich in deviltry and sin. There is never a plain ball in Greenwich Village. It is always "A Bacchanalian Revel of Lost Souls," "A Paphian Carousal of Imps and Demons," "A Saturnalia of the Sylphs of Satan," or "A Royal Carnival of the Priests and Priestesses of Passion." A perusal of the assemblages at these Revels, Carousals, Saturnalias and Carnivals would seem to indicate that the dismaying lost souls, imps and demons, sylphs of Satan and priests and priestesses of Passion bear an uncanny and disturbing resemblance to the nice boys and girls who work out in the packing rooms of one's own business offices. Yon bold and sinister sheik, for example, is surely Maxie Wanz, one's faithful office boy—surely one's own Maxie for all his false moustachios, his encircling bed-spread and his Aunt Matilda's nightcap, while yon seductive Lorelei, for all her enveloping tennis net that passeth for a fishing net and her brother Gustav's cane with a pocket flash tied to the top (thus transformed into a magic wand), is surely none other than the estimable Miss Louella Dingle who, with her no less estimable mother, runs the Wee Winkle Tea Room around the corner in Tenth Street. Yet these, true enough, do not constitute the entire population of this sink of glamorous carmine sin. Yon ferocious hundred and twenty pound cave-man in tiger-skin is seen, upon coming closer, to be none other than Eustace Sprudel, the Greenwich Village poet who achieved undying fame in Greenwich Village a few years ago

by getting a poem, after years of assiduous devotion to his art, into *Snappy Stories*, while yon resplendent Don Juan with the two days' growth of beard is identified to one as the celebrity of the Village whose peculiar genius consists in fashioning ukeleles out of old cigar boxes and spit-toons. Mingling with this gay crowd is a sprinkling of suckers from uptown, each nicked for an extra dollar for not appearing in costume. In this group one observes half a dozen cockeyed stock-brokers who have bought tickets in the fond hope of seeing the advance advertising matter come true and who sneak out considerably disgruntled when one o'clock comes around and the girls still have everything on but their nose powder, together with eight or ten college boys, more or less elegantly inebriated, who spend the evening trying to persuade the drummer to let them take his place in the orchestra, and two respectable dowagers who have come down with the fashionable young Willie Stuyvesant Hopfmüller to see the sights and who, after being razed in turn by a number of the more stewed lost souls, sylphs of Satan and priests and priestesses of Passion, manage to sidle out of the door and make a bee-line for the Club Trocadero.

At many of these gala debauches, a prize is offered for the most beautiful girl present. The committee of award, it is generally set forth in the advance announcements, will consist of Charles Dana Gibson, Harrison Fisher and Penryhn Stanlaws, "who will judge the winner according to the strictest artistic standards." The committee of award, on the night of the ball, is more usually discovered to consist of one of the young men who are floating the ball, some stray but sufficiently well-dressed soak who has wandered into the ball and loudly announced himself to be Anatole France, and some lesser comic cartoonist from one of the New York newspapers who has been sent a free ticket and who has boredly dropped in on his way home to have a

look at the shindig. From the looks of the last eight or nine hundred girls who have been awarded the beauty prize, it is evident that the voice and ballot of the comic cartoonist carry the most weight.

It is customarily announced that the prize-winning beauty will be awarded, in addition to the Crown of Beauty, one thousand dollars in gold, a leading rôle in George White's "Scandals," a painting of herself by the leading portrait painter of Italy, a free round-trip to Palm Beach, the entire front page of the New York Sunday *Times*' rotogravure section, a Rolls-Royce automobile, and a white Russian wolfhound with her name in full inscribed on the ruby-studded collar. Up to date, unless my private corps of statisticians is in grievous error, the most lavish prize that one of the winners of one of these beauty contests has received has been a ten cent celluloid badge inscribed with the words: "The Greatest Beauty in the World," supplemented with a copy of the circular announcing that the winner of the contest would get, in addition to the Crown of Beauty, one thousand dollars in gold, a leading rôle in George White's "Scandals," a painting of herself by the leading portrait painter of Italy, a free round-trip to Palm Beach, the entire front page of the New York Sunday *Times*' rotogravure section, a Rolls-Royce automobile, and a white Russian wolfhound with her name in full inscribed on the ruby-studded collar.

A leading feature of the Greenwich Village balls is the "pageant." Like the balls themselves, these pageants bear very flossy names. When they are not called "The Pageant of the Eunuchs and Courtesans of Ancient Egyptium" or something of the kind, they bear some such Macdougall-Alley-French title as "La Pageant Royale et Superbe des Demoiselles de la Maison D'Or." But whatever their names, the pageants are always the same.

They usually begin at twelve o'clock midnight. The band lets loose a flourish and through the door at the upper end

of the floor bounds a fat young man clad in a cerise union suit, brandishing aloft a gilded broom handle, and yclept Apollo. Apollo waves the gilded broomstick in the air thrice and in a Robert B. Mantell voice summons forth from the shadows of the past the shades of Rameses, Agamemnon, Buddha, Madame de Maintenon, Du Barry and Lucrezia Borgia. The band now goes into a spooky tune and out come three male Greenwich Villagers in colored B.V.D.'s and three Village girls in white cheesecloth with green sashes of the same material. These are, respectively, Rameses, Agamemnon and Buddha, and Madame de Maintenon, Du Barry and Lucrezia Borgia. The sextet kneels on the floor, the boys facing the girls, and each section bows three times to the other. Then they struggle to their feet, join hands and do ring-around-a-rosy. This finished, Apollo again brandishes aloft his gilded broom handle and proclaims the rise of the Nubian moon. The band starts up a march, which with acute relevance to a "Pageant Royale et Superbe des Demoiselles de la Maison D'Or" usually turns out to be Sousa's "High School Cadets." Through the door now mosey forth in pairs about thirty or forty young men and women variously arrayed in homemade non-descripts representing individually everything from Mutt and Jeff to Titus Andronicus and from a Swedish peasant girl to Fannie Brice and representing collectively—if somewhat cryptically to the two sober persons out of the several hundred visitors present—the Demoiselles de la Maison D'Or. The parade marches around the floor twice, after which all the participants in it face the band, fall on their knees, lift up their hands to the ceiling and bend themselves in at the middle five or six times, chanting the meanwhile: "Allah, Allah, great is Allah!" Thus ends La Pageant Royale et Superbe.

The ball itself generally ends at half-past two with most of the men present trying to find out who the hell stole their overcoats.

PORTRAIT OF AN OLD MOTHER

BY ALICE MARY KIMBALL

I USED to wonder how divorces and murders could happen to law-abiding, church-going folks with electric lights in their nice, white houses, and hollyhocks in their front yards, and money in the bank—

Now—O God—I know!

An awful disgrace may happen to us this morning—to us, the Stovers and the Pillsburys, the oldest families in this township and the best thought of.

I feel sudden death in the air like the smell of a poison lily,

I feel divorce and suicide and the breaking up of a loving family going through the house in terrible red waves,

It goes in dizzy red waves like the waves of thick heat on an August day.

O Lord, I've nothing to blame myself for! That thought is a cup of cold water in the midst of torment.

I brought Lucy up to be a good woman. Why, she'd sooner hold her two hands in the fire till they burned off than do the things that Hawley girl has done!

I never talked to her of that which shouldn't be spoken of.

She never kissed any man but the one she was engaged to and married.

Her mind was a piece of blank paper when she went to the altar!

II

That lovely wedding

When she walked down the aisle and promised to love and obey Lee Stover!

I can see her now—her long veil, her hair like a shiny halo round the head of the Virgin Mary,

Eyes that was modest blue posies looking up at the sun—

The organ playing—the scent of the orange blossoms we'd sent away for—

And everybody buzzing about what a well-behaved girl she'd always been, and saying "What a handsome couple!" and "How nice that the groom has a steady, well-paid job!" and talking of the wedding presents and the new oak parlor set,

The sweet alto voice of Mrs. Doctor Busbee singing "Oh, Promise Me!"

And I—the bride's mother—

Wiping my eyes, knowing I'd done my duty.

I'd brought up Lucy innocent. I'd kept her mind from evil things.

III

Fanchette Hawley! That half-French drab!

The Jezebel!

If I could have my way I'd drive her out, Yes, if she starved and had to sleep in gutters!

Oh, I knew when I came

To stay and help while Lucy had her baby Just what *she* was—an adder

Glittering and coiling—lying in wait!

If I am sixty-nine, she didn't fool me— I'd like to choke her dead. 'Twouldn't be murder,

Killing a husband-stealer wouldn't be murder!

IV

When she asked Lee to take her in his car To Boonton Hills to pick some cherry boughs

I saw the thoughts that crawled and
squirmed behind her eyes.

I said: "I'll have my say," and so I says:
"Decent, self-respecting hired girls

Don't carry on with married men as you
do,

Don't pull their eyebrows out or wear
short hair

All frizzled like the insides of a mattress,
Don't wear silk stockings rolled below

their knees so'st you can't tell where
stocking ends and knee begins;

And those that sport bronze pumps to
scrub the porch in

Ain't likely to be better than they'd ought
to.

You might as well write love-letters to
Lee

As cook for him the brazen way you're
doing,

Courting him with maple cakes and cus-
tard pies,

And salads as immoral and outspoken as
the mating-call of a low animal,

And his poor wife lying helpless in the
hospital

With her week-old baby!"

She gave an uppish toss of the red hat she'd
spent her last week's wages for,

And a saucy switch of the silk skirt that
cost her a month of hard work,

And spit this out:

"Poor Lucy! I guess she ain't so bad off!
She's had Lee some time, ain't she? She's

got little Emmy and Buddy and the new
baby, hasn't she?

She's been kept soft and safe. She's had her
living made for her and her hard work
done for her,

She's had her new electric to drive, hasn't
she?

Well, what about *me*, Mrs. Pillsbury?

Did that God you're always praying to
make the world for married women?

Do you know there's ten girls to one man
in Peacham Village?

And all the decent men are married and
them that ain't are sticks?

And I ain't going to scrub and cook all day
and lie awake nights half-crazy with
lonesomeness,

Spring here—and them damn frogs a-hol-
lering in the swamp!

"Look here, Mrs. Pillsbury,

I guess Lee has earned a spell off, what
with sticking to the business day and
night,

Nothing doing for excitement in this dead
town,

Lucy melting out of shape over the chil-
dren like a blob of butter on a hot
day!

"Listen, Mrs. Pillsbury,

Peacham is full of old maids. God! I hate
Their squawking voices and dried-apple
skins

The crabbed souls blinking out of their
dull eyes!

And I ain't going to be one of them. Now
smoke that in your pipe!"

V

It knocked me flat! That I should live to
hear such talk

Out of a woman's lips! When Lee brought
the car 'round

I tried to show him there'd be talk and
scandal.

He said that I was old

And there was things I couldn't under-
stand,

And they drove off. The May night swal-
lowed them,

A treacherous night, it was,

With smell of apple-blossoms in the air,
And farmers' orchards on the far-off hills

like small white handkerchiefs spread on
bright grass,

There was a sky green as a gooseberry and
a moon like a thin piece of pie,

Gold light acrost the fields and thrushes
singing,

There shouldn't be such nights. They lead
to sin.

VI

O God, this morning—

A month after that evening of wrong-
doing—

Eight years after that sweet June wedding
 in the First Congregational Church,
 There was Lee bent double over the wheel
 of his little speed car and racing up and
 down the road as though the devil was
 driving him. He stopped at the edge of
 the town dump where the selectmen
 ought to have put a high iron fence
 years ago. I saw him looking over the
 edge. He drove by slow and then came
 back, zipping along, a black streak, like
 a man possessed. He teetered along the
 edge. I shut my eyes and prayed. But he
 didn't kill himself after all. He came in
 to breakfast. His face was white and his
 eyes was bloodshot and I heard him
 mumbling: "I'm finished, too, and I be-
 long down there. I belong there."

There was Lucy lying on the bed like a
 blessed angel of Heaven. Poor, poor
 dear, she doesn't know yet. There are
 things that can't be sensed by a woman
 that's been brought up as I brought
 Lucy up. Her yellow head was propped
 up on the pillows and Emmy and Buddy
 was gathered around her to take a peek
 at the new mite of a baby just back from
 the hospital—

There was Fanchette Hawley sulking in
 her room, and throwing things on the
 floor, and saying she was going to take
 carbolic acid because her appendicitis
 was worse—

Lord, she knows 'tain't no appendicitis,
 and I know, and Lee knows.

VII

I feel sudden death in the air like the smell
 of a poison lily,
 I feel murder and suicide and the breaking
 up of a loving family going through the
 house in terrible red waves,
 It goes in red waves like the waves of
 thick heat on a dizzy August day—
 It is as real as the kitchen stove—
 And I've had to get breakfast and find the
 leak in the ice-box and pick a chicken
 for dinner and get a sliver out of little
 Emmy's toe so'st she could go to school,
 Mr. Babbitt, the vegetable man, poked his
 head through the door and said he had
 nice, fresh rhubarb this morning at
 twenty cents a mess,
 The superintendent of the Sunday-school
 'phoned in that the next lesson would be
 on Noah and the Flood,
 Mrs. Hiram Bugbee, regent of the D. A. R.,
 dropped in to say that the Daughters
 would go in automobiles to Butternut
 Centre next week a-Tuesday to present
 a silver spoon to old Mrs. Hiram Dod-
 der, whose great-great-grandfather was
 a colonel in the Revolutionary War,
 And the feeling of sudden death hangs in
 the air like the smell of a poison lily . . .
 O God, I've nothing to blame myself for!
 I brought up my daughter to be a good
 woman!

BYRON IN AMERICA

BY SAMUEL C. CHEW

A HUNDRED years ago the news of Byron's heroic death at Missolonghi caused a sensation in America, as in Europe. Of that sensation there have come down to us records abundant and diverse, from the elegies which were printed in the poets' corners of obscure newspapers to the formal estimates which appeared in the influential reviews. As in England, France and Germany, the tributes in verse to the dead poet were almost innumerable; and the burden of all was similar. The poets were moved to their depths by the passing of a nobleman who was both a poet and a republican, for, as one elegist declared,

Though far from his home and his country he died,
Yet the loud voice of Freedom has hallowed
his tomb.

There were not wanting, of course, moralists to pass harsh strictures upon Byron's career, but they seldom ventured to express their opinions in verse. To give a list of their forgotten diatribes would be pedantry worse than useless; two specimens will suffice. In 1824 there appeared in New York an "Inquiry into the Moral Character of Lord Byron" by one James W. Simmons. Glimmering through the mass of tedious philosophizing which makes up this tract there appears a ray of charitable understanding of the poet's nature, a tendency to condone his faults. But the author of the "Inquiry" passed unwitting judgment upon his own work, for one page is brightened by the remark: "It is the supreme consolation of Dulness to volunteer its strictures upon Genius." A year later a scathing attack

upon Byron's memory was published in the *Atlantic Monthly*; and this anonymous onslaught was thought by someone in London to be worthy of republication in book-form. The English edition (1826) is entitled: "A Review of the Character and Writings of Lord Byron." The writer of a new preface assures us that "the poetical career of Byron is here traced by the hand of a master" and tells us that the book is an answer to "the ingenious and elaborate apologies which have been offered for [Byron's] aberrations and the specious glosses which have been drawn over his sentiments."

In American pulpits Byron's career was used as a text for denunciations of the atheist and libertine, the seducer of women and blasphemer of the Most High; and the estimable Lyman Beecher publicly expressed his regret that the poet had not come under his own particular surveillance and been led thereby to salvation. For a generation the press and pulpit continued to discuss Byron, and so spread knowledge of him and stimulated interest in his poetry. Though Bayard Taylor and a few others showed some appreciation of the greatness of Shelley and Keats, the literary history of America affords no parallel to the phenomenon which took place in England during the forties and fifties—the gradual usurpation of Byron's place by the posthumous renown of his two younger contemporaries. It was not till the sixties that Byronism in the Republic began to yield to the psychological subtleties of Robert Browning and the suave elegance of Alfred Lord Tennyson.

II

Byron admired America—or thought he did; perhaps what he really admired was American admiration of himself and his poetry. Of such regard he had abundant evidence. As early as 1813 the sight of an American reprint of "English Bards" gave him, as he said, "a kind of posthumous feel"; and in later years more fulsome transatlantic tributes inspired the sensation of "talking with Posterity on the other side of the Styx." In 1821, during his sojourn at Ravenna, he was visited by a young Bostonian, a Mr. Coolidge, who told the poet that he had bought in Rome a replica of Thorwaldsen's famous bust. "I confess," says Byron, "I was more flattered by this . . . than if they had decreed me a statue in the Paris Pantheon. I would not pay the price of a Thorwaldsen bust for any human head and shoulders, except Napoleon's or my children's, or some absurd womankind's." But he feared that his admirer from Massachusetts (who was, it would seem, his name to the contrary notwithstanding, a romantic, enthusiastic young man) was disappointed in him, finding him perhaps too much the man of the world, too little the inspired Bard. "I can never get people to understand," he explains, "that poetry is the expression of excited passion, and that there is no such thing as a life of passion any more than a continuous earthquake. Besides who would ever *shave* themselves in such a state?" One wonders whether the Thorwaldsen bust still exists among the lares and penates of the Coolidge clan.

A mere replica would not content the metropolitan admirers of the poet; and when, in 1822, a certain Mr. Bruen of New York asked Byron, on behalf of a group of compatriots, to sit for his portrait to the celebrated American artist, Benjamin West, the poet was flattered, and though he had "resolved to sit for no more such vanities," he consented, holding that this sign of popularity oversea was, as he told John

Murray, "some compensation for your English native brutality, so fully displayed this year . . . to its brightest extent." He received various American visitors during these years. To George Bancroft, who brought him good tidings of his renown in Germany, he presented an autographed copy of "Don Juan" which afterwards passed into the Lenox collection. While he was at Genoa in 1822 an American naval squadron came into the harbor and he was invited on board the flag-ship. Byron's comment is that he was "received with the greatest kindness, and rather too much ceremony"—evidence of the antiquity of our national habit of too lavishly entertaining foreign literary celebrities. Byron records further that a lady from Philadelphia (whose name has not come down to us) "took a rose which I wore, from me, and said that she wished to send something which I had about me to America." He closes the incident at this point; but from Bancroft we learn that the following day the poet sent her "a charming note and a copy of 'Outlines to Faust'" (doubtless the famous series by Moritz Retzsch).

Americans were gratified by the noble poet's republicanism; they seem to have been unaware of the obvious fact that he wore his tri-color cockade with a difference. "Yes," Byron seems to say, "we are all brothers; but—ahem!—would you mind sitting a bit further down the table?" For he was no social "leveller" (to employ a word now passed from our vocabulary). Yet his political republicanism was sincere, and his hearty detestation of tyrants, foreign or domestic, dynastic or parvenu, led him to turn his gaze towards the New World. To the end of his life he remained of two minds towards Napoleon, in whom the elements of greatness were confused by cruelty and ambition, but he let his "weary eye" repose with satisfaction upon the modern Cincinnatus who

Bequeathed the name of Washington
To make men blush there was but one.

In "Don Juan" he declares that Washington's battle-fields, like those of Leonidas, are holy ground, for they "breathe of nations saved, not worlds undone." And his maguiloquent "Ode to Venice" is redeemed from the commonplace by the concluding tribute to the land

Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeathed—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land. . . .
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!

Moved by the lethargic despair in which Italy lay (and to which Leopardi was then giving immortal expression), Byron declares that rather than exist where life creeps lazily along or rests in stagnation it were better to lie "in the proud charnel of Thermopylae" or to add "one freeman, more, America, to thee."—And then, presently, someone sends him an abusive American review of his poems; and repudiating these magnificent sentiments he turns with a characteristic gesture upon himself, saying, "In future I will compliment nothing but Canada, and desert to the English."

In 1822 and 1823, dispirited by the death of Shelley, bored by his blonde mistress, and conscious of the fact that his connection with Leigh Hunt had made him appear "low" in the eyes of Englishmen of the "better" sort, aware, indeed, that he was somewhat out-moded at home, Byron wished to leave Italy. There was some thought of emigrating westward; his idea was, however, to go not to the United States but to Bolivar's country. "I have many years had transatlantic projects of settlement," he writes to a friend. "I am told that land is very cheap there; but though I have no great disposable funds to vest in such purchases, yet my income . . . would be sufficient in any country (except England) for all the comforts of life, and for most of its luxuries. . . . As I do not go there to speculate, but to settle,

without any views but those of independence and the enjoyment of the common civil rights, I should presume such an arrival would not be unwelcome." And he adds: "I speak of *South America*, recollect."

In Spanish-America, indeed, he might have been not far from content, for his temperament and way of life were Latin rather than Anglo-Saxon; and the cheerfulness with which, during both his visits to the Near East, he bore hardships, danger, squalor, and squabbling companions is warrant for the belief that he would have made no contemptible frontiersman, by no means requiring "all the comforts of life and most of its luxuries." For all its echoes of Rousseau, sincerity is patent in the well-known passage of "Don Juan" in which Byron describes the life of Daniel Boone. Boone had health, and long life, and children tall and fleet of foot. Crime, a stranger to solitude, came not near him; and when men followed in his tracks it was a simple matter to move further on, "where there were fewer houses and more ease." In contrast to this life of the frontier Byron points to war, pestilence, and despotism—"the sweet consequence of large society."

In the Kentucky of a century ago Byron might have been reasonably happy, finding in the rough and homely duties of daily life that "something craggy to break his mind upon" which in Italy he could find only in the study of Armenian grammar. In Kentucky—yes; but imagine the poet in the towns of the eastern seaboard: in Boston, not yet risen to intellectual pre-eminence; in Philadelphia, home of the most prosperous literary coterie; in New York, which was just beginning to contest Philadelphia's claim as the centre of culture! A giant among jealous dwarfs; a gorgeous exotic bird among blinking owls and chattering jays; a genius among literary *canaille*; Byron hobnobbing with Bryant and Freneau, and finding in Fitz-Greene Halleck his one sympathetic companion! Poe's martyrdom points the lesson.

III

Byronism appeared in America at an early date and struck root in the rank romantic soil, and was still flourishing long after it had withered in England and had become a weedy subterranean growth in France and Germany. Our older public libraries shelter, on high unfrequented shelves, a multitude of early off-shoots of Byron's poetry. Of most of them it is safe to say that if they are examined once every hundred years, on the occasion of Byron's centenaries, the conscientious critic will have done his duty by them. Knowledge of a certain monograph will lighten the critic's labors. In his early academic career, burdened with the necessity to produce a dissertation for the doctorate, an American poet of our own time, William Ellery Leonard, devoted himself to the lucubrations of the American Byronists, and spread them out in his thesis, "Byron and Byronism in America." I draw freely upon this fairly agreeable specimen of a disagreeable literary species; but I shall add some notes on a few productions that escaped inclusion in Mr. Leonard's catalogue.

In 1811, at a time when American periodicals borrowed most of their reviews from the English magazines, a twelve-page original notice of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers" in the *Portfolio* of Philadelphia offered a noteworthy indication of the interest that was being taken in this country in Byron's career, then just opening. The anonymous reviewer was even aware of the fact that his Lordship was then on his travels in the East and he speculated upon the possibility of further encounters with Jeffrey and other foes on the poet's return. Byron, in this article, is spoken of as a disciple of William Gifford, a classification that is not astonishing, for in 1811 "The Baviad" and "The Maeviad" had not yet passed into limbo and the preface to "English Bards" in some measure justified the reviewer. In after years "English Bards" was responsible

for a numerous American progeny, all quite drab and deplorable. Earliest of these was Solyman Brown's satirico-poetic "Essay on American Poetry" (New Haven, 1817). In this work the debt to Byron is implied in a long note on the poet's domestic troubles, and among the minor poems in the volume is one pretending to come from the pen of Lady Byron, who is represented as upbraiding her faithless Lord. Somewhat better than this satire is J. L. Martin's "Native Bards" (Philadelphia, 1831). This attacks the Byronic vogue, then at its height. Among the external manifestations of that vogue were Byronic curls and open collars and lowering looks, all of which the satirist wisely characterizes as "nauseous tricks" that at most can but "deceive some foolish girl." Leave such antics, he counsels, and "go plough your fields." Another imitation, entitled "Reviewers Reviewed," was written by a Miss Ritchie to avenge the slighting reception of her metrical romance, "Pelayo." Romance, reviewers, and review are now all alike forgotten. Still another was L. A. Wilmer's "The Quacks of Helicon" (1841). This virulent and unjust performance has been kept faintly in memory by Poe's notice of it. In a pseudonymous satire called "The Poets and Poetry of America" (1847) imitation yields place to shameless plagiarism of Byron's ideas and tricks of phrase. This, too, is not quite forgotten, for it has been attributed, though probably in jest, to Poe. "Parnassus in Pillory" (1851) is of interest for its recognition of the extent to which contemporary American verse was under obligations to the leading English poets and for its expressions of contempt for the servile genuflections and prostrations which American men of letters executed before their British brothers:

Our country swarms with bards who've crossed
the water
And think their native land earth's meanest
quarter.

"Parnassus in Philadelphia" (1854) is replete with phrase and allusion and epi-

thet filched from Byron; but the only lines that can attract any reader today are those lamenting the fact that Apollo's throne is no longer reared between the Delaware and the Schuylkill. Ten thousand lyres, the satirist declares, sound in New England, and the South wafts back a kindred song:

But thou, O Philadelphia! Poesy,
Though living yet, is almost dead to thee.

So much—it is a dry catalogue—for the offspring of "English Bards." Byron's other formal satires, "Hints from Horace" and "The Age of Bronze," awoke no echo in the United States. Nor did his plays receive the homage of imitation. During the decades which followed his death there were attempts a-plenty to revive the poetic drama upon the stage, but these abortive efforts were inspired by Sheridan Knowles, T. N. Talfourd, and the other "Elizabethanists," and not by Byron. One finds no direct imitation even of "Manfred" and "Cain," for American Byronism was so strangely crossed with pietism that the bold speculations and defiant blasphemies of these formidable protagonists were carefully avoided by the respectable Byronists of New York and Philadelphia. It is along three other lines that Byron's influence shaped itself in the main: Romanticism, with a slender but not insincere thread of Philhellenism interwoven; Melancholy, with just a hint of the cult of Satanism; and Irony, with a dash of Passion, seldom rude enough, however, to raise the blush of shame to the cheek of virginity.

IV

The *glaours*, corsairs and pirates who infest the Mediterranean of Byron's youthful imagination have their origins deep in the Eighteenth Century cult of the oriental and the exotic; and they have in them something of Rousseau. But they are also own cousins of Scott's barons and outlaws of the Border; and pirates and barons

alike owe much to the example of the heroes of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances. It is difficult to separate these elements in the characters of the wild and self-willed heroes imagined by the early American poets. A rough but fairly sound distinction is this: that a plentiful dash of chivalry marks the derivation from Scott; a suggestion of the supernatural points to Mrs. Radcliffe; an inordinate amount of gloom and pride indicates descent from the Noble Poet. Analysis is made harder by the fact that the Republic contributed to the synthesis some native elements, notably the introduction of the Indian chief in place of the corsair or Border hero. Here the influence of Chateaubriand and the French cult of *l'homme sauvage* was at work. Moreover, the gentle pseudo-Byronism of Mrs. Hemans (a poetess immensely popular in this country in her day) combined with an indigenous strain to produce a strange concoction of Byronism and piety, of gloom and edification, of revolt and religiosity. The Byronic hero, American style, however disgracefully he may behave, is apt to leave behind him at home a dear old mother who prays for her wayward son.

At all events, there is plenty of Byronism to be found in our poetry between 1820 and 1860, however much contaminated and diluted. R. H. Dana's "Buccaneer" (1827) is a characteristic mixture of outlawry, diseased egoism, supernatural terror, and praise of the simple life. In the same year Poe began his literary career with "Tamerlane," which in its pride and gloom and remorse owes much to Byron, though through it there runs a vein of mysticism that is foreign to its principal source. In his mature work Poe shook off the influence of the English poet; but in his character and appearance and way of life there remained always certain traits which led people to associate his name with Byron's.

But far more definitely Byronic are the poetry and personality of James G. Percival, much of whose verse is sheer

pastiche. His heroes are given to lonely contemplation of their disillusionment. In some of his poems he manages to suggest something of Byron's sense of the sublime in nature, and he has a certain feeling for the grand march of history. Of all the American Byronists, Percival is the one most sincerely touched by Philhellenism; in the case of the others one feels that their sympathy for suffering Greece is but an ephemeral fashion or literary convention, derived from the interventionist movement in London, or, at secondhand, from the strong current of Philhellenism in France and Germany, which so powerfully affected Victor Hugo, Adelbert von Chamisso, and other poets. Percival is representative, too, of those young romantics who fancied that by exposing their bare throats and glooming in dark corners they could ape the author of "Childe Harold." The writer of a series of articles on "American Literature" in the *Athenaeum* for 1835 says that "Percival looks the poet more absolutely than any man we ever saw; it is written on his forehead, and steeped in his eye, and wound about his lips." And his friend Samuel Goodrich thought that he "had been deeply injured—nay ruined by the reading of Byron's works."

This same Goodrich committed Byronism in his narrative poem, "The Outcast," in which Murder, Mystery, Sentiment, Asterisks, and other ingredients of the Byronic recipe are beaten up with Resignation and Piety into a characteristic early American mess, flavored with the theme of "Oh, where is my wandering boy tonight." And N. P. Willis, discarding temporarily the "nattiness" and "jauntiness" for which, through Lowell, we remember him, delivered himself in 1835 of "Melanie," an Italianate tale of an adulterous nun and a bastard brother, written in the manner of "Parisina." The insincerity of the Byronists is here caught *in flagrante delicto*. The scholarly and (when his political prejudices were not aroused) gentle Bayard

Taylor combined in "Amram's Wooing" the oriental-passionate plot with the soothingly American happy ending. Mrs. E. Anne Lewis was, however, the most prolific of all those purveyors of narrative-romantic Byronism. I have no space to record even the titles of all the poems in which she pilfered from Byron. She was Orientalist, Italianist, Hispanist, Hellenist, and sentimentalist by turns—and all at second-hand. In the poem which has most significance for us she depicts the Indian Chief Kaughnawah, who is none other than our old friend the Byronic hero-villain, daubed with war-paint, festooned with feathers, and brandishing a tomahawk instead of the traditional scimitar. As stage-setting for this redoubtable figure obviously neither Sunium's marble steep nor the shore of an Isle of Greece is available; but Goat Island answers the purpose admirably; and from this spring-board Kaughnawah presently, to the reader's inexpressible relief, precipitates himself into the boiling cataract of Niagara. The European Byronists had no such mass of waters wherein to quench the fire preying upon their heroes' hearts and had perforce to content themselves with the only instruments at hand, the comparatively commonplace poison-vial and concealed dagger. Mrs. Lewis exploited to the full the advantages of her transatlantic situation.

V

The hero-villain of the Byronists presents a forlorn spectacle today. His tin sword is bent and battered; his sombre cloak faded and in shreds; his false moustachios meagre and awry. His ghost, ejected from its pristine poetic haunts, stalked for a while through the pages of the prose romance, gradually going down in the world and finding at last no refuge even within the covers of penny dreadfuls. Of late he has been analyzed and psycho-analyzed. A drop of his blood, perhaps, courses through the veins of Joseph Conrad's Peyrol, that

Brother of the Coast, that "man of dark deeds, but of large heart." But the unaltered and unadulterated Byronic hero-villain is a vanished literary type, dead and done with. Not so Byron himself; when I am told, as occasionally I am told, that "Byron is dead" I reply with the Scotsman: "I'd no bury him just yet—wait till he smells a wee grewsome." For in Byron there is something else than Violence and Crime and Fidelity to an Only Love, something by no means altogether histrionic. The Byronic despair and defiance are among the permanent possessions of the human mind. "Byron," said an anonymous critic some years ago, "sowed the spirit of questioning, and the courage of denial, deep in the hearts of men. . . . He is our deputy-rebel, and he has this advantage, that he speaks not as a croaker in a corner, but, with incomparable strength of utterance, as a man who had seen the kingdoms of the world and their glory." This advantage was not possessed by the paltry versifiers, the "croakers in a corner,"—English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Russian, American—who turned the plangent rhetoric of "Childe Harold" into thin wailings or hoarse complaints. It is with a sensation akin to sea-sickness that one hears Willis Gaylord Clark lament that "man sinks down to death, chilled by the touch of time." Nor are we much impressed when Percival sighs—

Life is made of gloom,
The fairest scenes are clad in ruin's pall,
The loveliest pathway leads but to the tomb. . . .
A moment brightens manhood's Summer ray,
Then all is rapt in cold and comfortless decay.

Or when youthful Richard Henry Stoddard complains that

buried hopes no more will bloom
As in the days of old;
My youth is lying in the tomb,
My heart is dead and cold.

Or when the boyish William Winter (who lived to achieve a critical faculty that was exercised more than once upon Byron)

laboriously manufactures such lines as these:

Pride wastes affection—what is Wisdom's state?
The soul is void—the heart is desolate.

The extreme of this phase of Byronism meets us in the person of McDonald Clarke, who was, so Mr. Leonard tells us, "Byron-mad, even frontispicing his works with his own portrait, having side pose, collar and locks almost identical with Byron's, and, save for the somewhat more angular features, hardly to be distinguished from his." There is no virility in the maudlin company. The lachrymosity in which Byron himself, in his weaker moments, indulged is here unrelieved by any touch of revolt. The American Byronists are not numbered among the "souls that dare look the Everlasting in his face and tell him that his evil is not good." They never impugn the Omnipotent. Nay more; there is often treachery in the Byronic camp, for the weapons of the poet's manner are turned to the uses of orthodoxy, as in this stanza:

Doth gloomy fate with sullen frown
Consume thy soul with care?
Hast thou the draught of misery known,
Whose dregs are dark despair?
Art thou oppressed with sorrow's doom,
Thy heart with anguish torn?
Oh, soon that sad and cheerless gloom
Shall make a brighter morn.

VI

But there is a greater Byron than the atrabilious and saturnine romantic who awoke these lugubrious echoes across the ocean. There is the writer of "The Vision of Judgment" and "Don Juan," the supreme satirist and ironist in English verse. It is interesting to observe the impact of "Don Juan," the most sophisticated of poems, upon a singularly unsophisticated society. In my book on "Byron in England" I have published an account of the no less than twenty-nine attempts that have been made to carry on the story of Byron's unfinished poem.

Four of these continuations were by Americans. Of the earlier two I need not speak again here; but upon the others (which are not mentioned in Mr. Leonard's monograph) a paragraph or two may be profitably spent.

In the Library of Congress may be found a stout volume entitled "The Rest of Don Juan" (1846). The author, one Henry Morford, seems to have made a specialty (like Sir Harry Johnston in our own day) of continuing famous works of literature; at any rate he lived long enough to seize the opportunity to write "John Jasper's Secret," one of the many attempts to complete "Edwin Drood." His "Don Juan" is inscribed "To the Shade of Byron"; and a captivating motto furnishes the assurance required by all American readers of the epoch: "If rough talk offend thee, we'll have very little of it." His poem is long—some six hundred and forty-five stanzas divided into seven cantos. The story, setting aside the tedious digressions, is of Juan's departure from England, his wanderings over Europe, and his arrival at Paris in time to witness various episodes of the French Revolution. A sweetheart there, whom he has cast off, murders a wealthy woman whom he is about to marry. The French capital becomes, not unnaturally, distasteful to him, and he returns to his native Seville where he settles down to a life of easy virtue and virtuosity. Dissoluteness is a prelude to dissolution, and one night, at a banquet, a tall dark stranger enters the room and beckons Juan away. The two depart together while the lights burn blue and the guests smell brimstone. On the morrow Juan's body is found in a cemetery. For such an ending Morford found a hint in Byron's poem.

Very different is the "Seventeenth Canto" which the talented and too-early lost Richard Hovey published in his volume, "To the End of the Trail," in 1908. This is one of the most convincing reproductions of the spirit and movement of Byron's verse that I have ever come across. It is supposed to be written by Byron in

Hades. The poet refuses to take up the poem at the point at which Death had cut him short.—

Southey's forgotten; so is Castlereagh;
But there are fools and scoundrels still today.

In the sequel we hear nothing of Juan; the satire is expended upon current affairs. Byron is full of curiosity as to events on earth:

I've such a next-day's thirst for information,
I'd even be content to read the *Nation*.

So much for the few American continuations of "Don Juan." Turning now to the imitations of that poem, I note first Fitz-Greene Halleck's once-famous and still fairly readable "Fanny" (1819). Halleck's abilities are not sufficient to cope with the exigencies of the octave and he shortens the stanza to six lines; but he has a good store of deft rimes and he manages the anti-climax, a feature of the genre, amusingly. "Fanny" has been kept in memory by the characterization of it in the "Fables for Critics" as

a pseudo-"Don Juan,"
With the wickedness out that gave salt to the true one.

It is not quite that; for though there was no wickedness in Halleck or in his poem, there is a good deal of salt in the latter, and it is sprinkled with a liberal hand over the fashions and foibles of flashy New York society. But "Fanny" has nothing of Byron's cynicism; such a quality was not to be expected of the man whom Bayard Taylor characterized as "the brave, bright and beautiful growth of a healthy masculine race." Healthy masculine races must pay for their brightness and beauty by the loss of other qualities possessed by less fortunately endowed rivals; Halleck has nothing of Byron's range and profundity.

A quaint production (overlooked by Mr. Leonard) is a long anonymous poem called "The Pilgrimage of Ormond, or Childe Harold in the New World," which was

published at Charleston, South Carolina, in 1831. This is a hybrid, for though a continuation of "Childe Harold" and written in Spenserians, the manner is that of "Don Juan." The Childe, thoroughly reformed, visits America and travels widely through the Southern States. His moderately diverting escapades are intermingled with descriptive and meditative passages and with tributes to leading Americans of the epoch.

Charleston engendered also one of the most ardent of the transatlantic Byronists, William Gilmore Simms, who, after pouring out a flood of lyric verse of a quality that betrays its model, gave to the world in 1843 his narrative poem, "Donna Florida." This he had left unfinished in his youth, and by the time that he decided upon publication he had developed doubts about it, and perhaps about Byron; for in a curious apologetic preface he speaks of his boyish presumption in having fancied that he could imitate the grace and felicity of "that unhappy production" (as he calls "Don Juan") "without falling into its licentiousness of utterance and malignity of mood." It was an English poeticule whom Byron had chastized good-naturedly for attempting to be "a sort of moral Me." Simms succeeded in this impossible attempt no better than Barry Cornwall had done.

Byron's more frivolous moods harmonize pretty well with the temperament of Nathaniel Parker Willis, whose "Lady Jane" (1844) had a success in this country surpassed only by "Fanny" and by "Don Juan" itself. Like Simms, Willis has a more definite and unified tale to narrate than Byron had or had wanted; but, unlike Simms, he indulges in long digressions, mostly mildly satiric; and occasionally he ventures into the domain of "high" poetry, only to fall thence into bathos. Greatly daring, he risks an infrequent racy passage, though with proper consideration of the so easily summoned virginal blushes against which our forefathers were constantly on their guard.

Then there is George Lunt's "Julia" (1855), which, like so many of the imitations, combines moods that are independent or differently mingled in the original, and in combining, spoils them. Lunt's satire is painfully feeble; his lyrics excessively mediocre; and when he tries to soar into Childe Harold-ish meditations upon the sadness of life and death's inevitability the result is dreary and depressing in a fashion that Lunt never intended. Yet "Julia" is an instructive performance, for to a fuller extent than any other product of its school it betrays the tendency to blend the Byronic gloom with a bourgeois sentimentality to which by this time Dickens was pointing the way, though to be sure there was no lack of native guides. In Simms and Lunt the tale's the thing, the digressions being few and unimportant. In "Cabirot" (1840-64), by the untiring George Henry Calvert, on the other hand, the narrative element is slim and the deviations have a more intellectual quality than one finds in other imitations or would expect from Calvert. His poem is still worth glancing at, if only for the light it casts upon contemporary American opinion of the English romantic poets. Nor are its passages of social satire altogether contemptible. In W. W. Western's "To Whom It May Concern: A Poem on the Times" Byron's manner and method are put to queer uses, for the poem tells in satiric vein of the authentic adventures of two Confederate officers who passed the blockade and made their way to Liverpool.

VII

In our own troubled and absurd era it has occurred to several writers that in Byron's Bernesque way of envisaging the serious and uncomfortable facts of life there are still weapons of irony and correction. Gilbert Cannan, in England, has attempted to revive the mood in his long epic, "Noël"; but far more successful are the two satiric poems by Gilbert Frankau which, though they do not sustain

throughout a uniform level of interest and excellence (a feat which neither Byron nor Pulci, Casti and Berni before him had been equal to), are nevertheless arrestingly clever and full of pungent and penetrating satire and of shrewd observation of the curious phenomena of this sorry world. And here in America, in the midst of the Coolidge régime, a quaint, wise, far-traveled, experienced but not altogether embittered person who hides himself behind the pseudonym of "Autolycus" has very lately published his "epic, comic in intention" entitled "Ulug Beg," an adventurous tale of Turkestan and of Russian and Mohammedan politics in the East. The author's literary debt is gracefully acknowledged in a motto upon the title-page, drawn from "Love's Labor's Lost": "Nay, I have verses, too, I thank Biron."

In Frankau and "Autolycus" there are marks of lineal descent from the greatest of English satiric poets. Their work, indeed, is not unworthy of the illustrious original, howsoever far it falls short of "Don Juan" in the elements that insure an audience among posterity. These latest

experimenters in the genre realize, as Byron realized, and make evident, as he made evident, that man

Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep, who with our spleens
Would they themselves laugh mortal.

The splenetic is an element of the Bernesque; therefore those poets laugh. Yet, as Figaro said before Byron and as "Autolycus" might say today, "*Je me presse de rire de tout, de peur d'être obligé d'en pleurer.*"

With no more appropriate quotation, were I given to perorations, could I bring this survey to a close; yet the true moral of my tale lies elsewhere than in the *comédie larmoyante* of humanity. It is a practical one: the lesson derived from the example of the American Byronists is the same that is found in the many failures and half successes with which our national literature is strewn, namely, that the way to greatness in any of the arts lies for us, not in imitation of European models, but in the confident exploitation of the themes and moods and situations that are native to us.

AMERICAN PORTRAITS

II. The Washington Job-Holder

BY HARVEY FERGUSON

OBSERVE closely the common middle-class American who has neither means nor any special talent, and you will find his life dominated by two desires: for security and for gentility. He yearns to be sure of bed, board and clothing, and he yearns to work sitting down, to wear a white collar, to feel superior to the men who sweat.

These, of course, are characteristics of *Homos sapiens* everywhere, but I believe they are especially marked in the Middle American breed. There is a tradition that restless daring is an American quality, but the reality of it has largely disappeared with the pioneering conditions that gave rise to it. The average American of today is no longer a man tempted by wide freedom and opportunity to bold enterprise. He is, on the contrary, a man whose political liberties have been restricted in every direction, who lives under a peculiarly ruthless economic system, and who is brought up to a hard and narrow social discipline. Most of his old individuality and enterprise have thus been squeezed out of him. He has acquired the longing of the cowed man for mere safety. When he goes hunting for a job, he always asks first, Is it permanent?

This man still believes, of course, in the traditional American freedom that he has lost. Although his government has been long operated by politicians who swindle him for the benefit of property-owners who exploit him, he yet believes with a childlike faith that he lives in a land of political liberty. Although his economic status often closely resembles

slavery, he yet holds that America is the land *par excellence* of equal opportunity. Himself generally a snob and living under a complicated and preposterous caste system, he continues nevertheless to hold his faith in the democratic tradition of social equality.

His political liberty and his economic opportunity have become, for the most part, mere national myths, supported by no reality in his actual experience, but he is still able to achieve, at times, the caressing illusion that he is making social progress. Every farm boy and city workman who climbs out of his overalls and into an office job gets the glowing feeling that he has risen from one social class to the next higher, even though he has lost in comfort and well-being by the move. And so the majority of Americans go on aspiring, still with some hope of success, to what they believe to be a more genteel and elevated station in life. The typical common American becomes a man who is timid, cowed, ruthlessly clubbed into submission by his masters, asking above all for safety, and yet one who clings stubbornly to his social pretensions and ambitions. The fact accounts for a great deal in American life. It accounts perfectly for the Federal job-holder—for his characteristics as a man, and for his astonishing increase in numbers.

II

The government job is very nearly the ideal job for the young fellow who wants above all to be sure of an easy living, made in a genteel way. All of the posts under Uncle Sam, except a few held mostly

by Negroes, are white collar jobs with high-sounding titles. The salaries are fixed by law and guaranteed by the government. A Federal employé cannot be dismissed except for the rankest kind of incompetence or misconduct, and in case of trouble with his superiors he can always appeal to his Congressman, to the Civil Service Commission or to the Federal Employés' Union. When he is superannuated he draws a pension. His whole life is arranged for him. He has nothing to do but sit down in his swivel chair and wait for death, with light and agreeable work to pass the time while he is waiting.

It is evident that to the bold and enterprising American of tradition and story—the American of Walt Whitman's dream or the typical hero of American popular fiction—a job of that sort would be intolerable. Yet the demand for such jobs grows faster than Congress can manufacture them, and it manufactures thousands of them at every session. And the greatest demand is for the lowliest jobs. There are always long waiting lists of common clerks, but the few positions that require skill and training are sometimes hard to fill.

Few Americans are aware of the rate at which this horde of job-holders has grown, is growing, and will continue to grow, unless checked by some unprecedented and inconceivable act of God. The records of the Civil Service Commission show that in 1821 there were 8,211 civilian employés on the government rolls. The population of the United States was then about 9,000,000, which meant about 3,500,000 persons gainfully employed. There was thus one Federal civil employé, approximately, for every 425 Americans gainfully employed. In March, 1923, there were 504,778 civilian employés on the Federal roster. Calculating in the same way, this means that one out of every seventy-five American breadwinners had a hoof in the Federal trough. It means that the army of job-holders had grown five times as fast as the population.

The population is growing more and more slowly, as each successive census reveals, but the army of job-holders is increasing at a steadily accelerating rate. If both grow for the next hundred years at the same relative rates as in the past, there will be about 40,000,000 names on the Federal pay-roll a century hence, and one out of every twelve American wage-earners will have a government job. The roll has grown, not naturally, but by a series of rapid expansions, each of which involved stretching the Constitution to permit the founding of new bureaux. Every one of these bureaux began as a small office having from two to a dozen employés. But by a law which almost never fails to operate, each has grown until it now gives employment to dozens, hundreds, and in some instances thousands of job-holders.

The first additions to the simple governmental machine of the Fathers were the Interior Department and the Department of Agriculture, established under the constitutional power of the Federal government to promote industry and agriculture. They began as one-man or two-man offices. They grew quickly and each began to throw off branches. The second stage began with the era of government regulation of industry. The Interstate Commerce Commission was the first and remains a typical product of that movement. It began with less than a dozen employés and now has nearly two thousand. Its chief work has been the physical valuation of the railroads, upon which it has been engaged since 1917. This work is now generally conceded to be futile—but it has provided a thousand or more patriots with good livings for years.

The third stage in the expansion of the bureaucracy was begun by the brilliant political invention of the half-and-half plan, whereby the Federal government appropriates funds to be spent in States which raise an amount equal to the Federal allotment. By this ingenious device, which has just begun to work, the

Federal government has gone into road-building, vocational education, the care of infants and expectant mothers, and teaching housewives how to can beans, and has added many thousands of deserving incompetents to the Federal pay-roll. The fourth and last stage in the process now apparently impends. It will consist in the actual operation of industry by the government. Government ownership of railroads already looms ahead, and a project for the government manufacture and sale of fertilizer has strong support in both Houses. The Norris-Sinclair bill provides that the Federal government shall undertake the sale and exportation of food. The demand for the government operation of coal-mines is well known.

Obviously, all this shows a steady drift toward the most passionate variety of state Socialism. Yet no major party in the United States has ever specifically advocated Socialism. On the contrary, all of our politicians have declaimed against it, and the very word has become anathema to every 100% American. But as the public lands have disappeared, as the monopoly of all natural resources has tightened, as the processes of economic subjugation and social standardization have gone forward, a constantly increasing army of Americans has yearned for the safety and respectability of government jobs, and so the politicians have been forced into creating the jobs, and into all sorts of Socialistic adventures to provide the excuse.

Almost every politician, of course, declines against this growth of Federal "paternalism" and against the burden of taxation which it lays upon the still active and industrious part of the population. But the proof of his insincerity, if any proof be needed, is found in the story of all the ostensible efforts of Congress to make the governmental machine more economical and efficient. Every move in this direction has resulted only in the creation of new commissions and bureaux; not one has ever reduced the Federal pay-roll in the slightest. The Civil

Service Commission, established in 1883 to abolish the spoils system and put the merit system in its place, has itself grown into an enormous bureau, crowded with job-holders. Its chief function has become to protect the job-holder from his superiors, and so to promote inefficiency. But Congressmen have never had much difficulty in going over its head. It may keep out a few almost fabulous incompetents, but it has not kept the classified service from being primarily so much political patronage.

A few years ago, largely through the efforts of one influential Senator, the Commission was supplemented by a Bureau of Efficiency, which quickly grew from two or three employes to fifty. Its chief occupation is carrying on a civil war with the Commission. The history of the late President Harding's attempt to reorganize the government departments is well known. An expert was hired to draw up a reorganization plan, but it encountered so much opposition that it never got before Congress. Two bills designed to deal with the bureaucracy were long deadlocked in a Senate committee. Both were designed to classify the jobs in the Federal service and to fix salaries for the different kinds of work done. Both, incidentally, provided substantial increases for most varieties of job-holders. One of them, sponsored by Senator Smoot, gave the chiefs of bureaux the power to discharge incompetents; the other, backed by the Federal Employes' Union, went to the opposite extreme. It provided a system of trial and appeal in case of dismissal which would have made it almost impossible to separate a job-holding moron from his job. It also provided much larger proportionate increases for the lower grades of employes than did the Smoot bill. In a word, the union bill was designed above all to make the government service safe and remunerative for the lowest type of man to be found in it. Despite the power of Senator Smoot, the bill reported to the Senate was substantially the union bill.

III

That the government service has become primarily a refuge for inferior men, and is run chiefly for their benefit, is seen in the way the lower class positions have been increased and fattened at the expense of those higher up. Just as in the reclassification bill just mentioned the smallest jobs were given the biggest raises, so in every increase of salaries since the government was founded the common clerk has profited at the expense of the executive and the technician. A stenographer, recently imported from some small town in Iowa where she would be lucky to make \$15 a week, gets from the government about \$1400 a year, while for highly trained technicians in some of its bureaux the government offers but \$1800. The inevitable result is that the brains of this huge bureaucracy have dwindled while its bulk has swelled. Generally speaking, only the least able and ambitious of technical and scientific men now seek the government service; the best of those in it are on the lookout for a chance to leave it. At times the turn-over in a technical bureau has been so rapid as to disrupt the work, and almost always the man who leaves is better than the man who takes his place. This cumulative intellectual impoverishment of the service accounts for the pettiness and puerility which hang about the whole bureaucratic establishment.

The chief of the Bureau of Efficiency admitted to me that it would be easy to hire at \$15 a week a large proportion of the typists and file clerks, mostly women, for whom the government pays from \$1400 to \$1600 a year,—that is, it would be easy if the government were allowed to buy its labor in the open market. But the positions are allotted by States, so many to each State in ratio to population, and to abolish this arrangement would be greatly to impair the value of these jobs as political patronage. The local politician's daughter who has come all the way from Iowa or Colorado to serve the Republic

must be paid enough to maintain herself in a fitting manner away from home and in a great city, regardless of her actual ability and diligence.

Congress, indeed, is especially tender in its attitude toward the thousands of women it has imported into Washington. An interesting proof of this is seen in the Plaza Hotel, which was built by the government during the war to provide housing for girl war-workers and is still caring for several thousand female employés at a considerable annual loss. Many of these girls draw from the government fifty to a hundred per cent more salary than they are worth, and are fed and housed by the government for about half what it would cost them to live otherwise. They are to all intents and purposes inmates of a charitable institution. They are provided not only with bed and board but also with entertainment and chaperonage. The government is especially careful of their moral welfare. At every session of Congress since the war, this Home for Virgin Bureaucrats has been loudly denounced, but the appropriations for its maintenance have always passed without serious opposition.

The way in which the so-called merit system works is too well known to need description here. Each applicant for a place in the classified service must pass an examination, very simple in the case of those applying for clerical positions. He then receives a rating on the roll of applicants from his State. In theory, his rating and the time of his application determine when he shall get the job, but in practice the support of an administration Congressman is of the greatest help. Almost every government position, with the exception of a few technical places that are hard to fill, is still a piece of political pie.

IV

The Washington spectacle then, as I see it, is that of a growing horde of decaying men and women, squeezed out of the industrial life of the country by their incapacity for

useful and remunerative work, and running to the government for food and shelter. The government service outside Washington, of course, is largely a continuation of that spectacle, and all of the State, municipal and county employes must be added to the total of those who have given up productive work for job-holding. The principal and most necessary duty of every Congressman—indeed, of every politician—is to care for his share of this beaten and incompetent mob, which demands a living of the state as the Roman rabble demanded the Corn Laws. The Congressman who does not get jobs for all those who have claims upon him is doomed to retirement. Thus, what he always craves is more jobs to give away, and especially more jobs of the simple sort which any idiot can fill.

It is but little realized how many great reputations for statecraft and even patriotism are founded primarily upon a deft management of this trade in jobs. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, for example, generally regarded by the public as an aloof and chilly intellectual, far above all the lusts of the flesh, is a famous job-getter and has maintained himself in the Senate by that art and mystery in the face of the most formidable opposition. Not only is he diligent in obtaining easy jobs for his lieges of Massachusetts; but his interest in them never ends so long as they are in Washington. He is constantly recommending promotions and raises for the cohort of Massachusetts men who swarm in the capital. No Senator is more assiduous in his care of the intellectual vacuums who are dependent upon him.

The character of Washington as a city shows the lamentable consequences of thus making it a dumping ground for men and women marked principally by timidity, a cheap pretense to gentility, and lack of imagination and enterprise. Washington is a thousand miles of Main Street. There is a little fluff of pompous official society, with its millionaire hangers-on and bawdy pushers at the top, and a huge African

sub-stratum of menial labor at the bottom. What lies between is a miserable society of middle-class dulness and mediocrity, eighth-rate people. The town has been often described as unique among American cities. As a matter of fact, the bulk of its population shows only a selective intensification of the typical. Uniformity and dulness are its most striking characteristics. There is no enterprise in the place and no courage, and very little sense.

Go beyond the restricted area where the government buildings stand and the part of the Northwest section which has been preempted by the ambitious rich, and you will find endless rows of little houses, built wall to wall, all exactly alike, broken here and there by huge blocks of cheap apartment houses—the tenements of low-grade respectability. Farther out are sprawling miles of cheap bungalow suburbs. The town's leading newspaper, the *Evening Star*, is a village gossip-sheet almost incredibly stupid and trivial; every effort to publish an intelligent newspaper in Washington has failed. Its theatres are the poorest to be found in any city of the size in the country. Movies and vaudeville are what succeed in Washington, as do also cheap amusement parks and even cheaper dance-halls.

Food and games the Roman rabble demanded. The man who has ceased to struggle, whose work is merely an easy but tiresome way of making a living, suffers always from boredom and has an immense appetite for mere spectacle and diversion—for amusement which requires no mental or physical effort. Washington is a city of free shows and especially of parades,—of military drills and manoeuvres, athletic contests, band concerts, speech-makings, fireworks, free movies, and all sorts of other blow-outs to which imbeciles go in mobs to gawk, listen and yell. Almost anything that is free will draw a crowd of the job-holding proletariat, and the huge public lawns and halls and the straight wide streets of the town are perfectly adapted to such gatherings.

V

The job-holder is generally an American of the old American stock; that is, he is not a product of the last two generations of immigration. He is most frequently of that Nordic strain whose imminent extinction has been so extensively lamented of late as a catastrophe to civilization. A look at the crowds that flood Washington's innumerable one-arm lunchrooms at noon will bear this out, and so will a reading of the names on any list of government employes. All this is to be expected. The old American stock still dominates the Republic politically. Congress might be described as a body of Nordic lawyers, with heads long and thick but not wide, and hair light or absent. It is natural that those of similar racial stock should be favored by congressional influence. This old American stock is being rapidly ousted from industry and commerce, and to a smaller but perceptible extent from the land, by people who have reached the United States during the last two generations. The job-holder is thus a dispossessed and beaten man, and many scions of our oldest families are in his ranks.

He owns little or no property, unless it is a home, in or near Washington, which he is buying on the installment plan. But a large percentage of his humble brethren once did own property, or else their fathers did. Many of them, indeed, are small farmers who have sold out in despair, or young men and women raised on farms who wanted to get to the city and live an easier and more genteel life. A typical Washington family consists of father, mother and three grown children, all holding government jobs, making about \$6000 a year among them. They

used to own a small farm in Ohio, where they probably seldom saw a thousand a year in cash.

But the job-holder is usually dissatisfied with his job and with himself. He is wont to say that there is no future in the service. He is often apologetic about being a government employé. He is fully aware that taking his job was a retreat and that keeping it is a surrender. Almost always he laments the dulness and monotony of his life. Very often he tells you that he is going to get out when the right time and the right opportunity come along. Sometimes he does so, of course, but usually Jefferson's saying holds good that "few die and none resign."

A characteristic figure is the man who came from some small town or farm to make a living while getting an education in Washington. Washington is full of night schools run for the benefit of such relatively ambitious fellows, and especially of law schools. The newcomer attends one of these and in three or four years he graduates. But meantime he has achieved an easy and comfortable living in some government bureau, doing some work that would be well within the capacities of a bright boy of twelve. In many cases he has married the stenographer or file clerk who sat across the desk from him. He has the responsibilities of a family man. The profession of law is crowded and difficult. Everything is difficult—except holding a job in Washington. He has dug himself into a deep little rut of security and routine. So he stays on, year after year, lulled by habit and ease, by Washington's curiously enervating climate, and by its atmosphere of dulness and indolence. He is a man lost in the battle—a man useless and forgotten.

THE SIRE OF KIWANIS

BY WILLIAM FEATHER

I BOUGHT a \$280 time-clock from a salesman the other day. As we closed the transaction he said, "Mr. Feather, I don't want to sell you just a piece of machinery—I want to do you a great Service."

He was a dapper young man, trimly dressed, his upper lip decorated with a smart moustache. He smiled easily, and spoke incisively.

"I'm in business for Service and only Service," he continued. "You couldn't buy a clock from me if you didn't need it. But you do need it, and I'd be shirking my duty to you, to my conscience and to this great free Republic of ours if I didn't use all the eloquence at my command to make you one of our satisfied users."

And so we both knelt down and prayed, and when we arose and had sung "The Star-Spangled Banner" I looked into his honest blue eyes and saw that they were filled with tears. Then I called to the book-keeper to bring me a blank check, which I signed and handed to my friend with these words: "Take this, brother! Fill in the amount yourself. Send the time-clock by airplane. How can I begin to thank you for what you have done for me? May the splendid Service of your wonderful company go on forever. Amen."

After he had left I sat alone for three hours and a half in an ecstasy of high resolve. How clearly he had pointed the way to success, achievement, glory! I felt myself in tune with the stars, with the planets, with the whole cosmos. This clock was to relieve me of all the depressing worries of business. It was to enable me at last to put my affairs on a scientific and idealistic basis. A monthly profit of a few miserable

dollars was to be swelled into a vast and ever-increasing fortune.

"Is it right, is it fair," he had demanded, "that for lack of a fully automatic, self-winding, nickel-plated time-clock your wife should be deprived of a fur coat and your son should be unable to go to college?"

He had showed me how the loss of a few minutes each day, multiplied by the rate of pay in our factory, and again multiplied by the number of working days in a year, leap years excepted, amounted to the difference between a stagnant, miserable existence and illimitable opulence for my family. Service had stretched out its long arm to me, and lifted me up.

II

This salesman was typical of scores who have called on me in late years, from whom I have only by extreme self-control resisted buying adding machines, lightning calculators, check protectors, filing cabinets, dictating machines, loose-leaf binders, wall maps, pencil sharpeners, trick ink wells, postage meters, envelope sealers and openers, typewriter duplicators, billing machines and addressing machines, not to mention thirteen methods of increasing production and nineteen ways of jazzing up the sales department.

The sales talk of all such agents and apostles of Service has been as accurately standardized as the parts of a Ford. What was the genesis of these modern talking machines? Where did they originate? Where did they learn the art of selling me a brass lead pencil for \$5 by proving to me that without it Shakespeare could not

have written "Hamlet"—by showing me testimonials from users of pencils who say, "If I could not get another I would not sell the one I have for \$10,000"?

I shall tell you in a moment. I shall tell you where the pilgrim of Service was conceived, hatched, educated, and developed to his highest perfection. I shall tell you, incidentally, the origin of the sales manual, the quota system, the guaranteed territory, the standardized demonstration, and the ninety and nine other great mysteries which engage the master minds at sales and advertising conferences and conventions. But first to the technique. Imagine you are being sold a machine to open envelopes. You don't want it, so you say you can't afford it. The answer is as follows:

"Sir, what do you consider a fair interest rate on money. Six per cent? What is the annual interest at six per cent on \$870? Exactly \$52.20. Now, sir, I have demonstrated and you have not denied that this device will save you \$5 a week. Therefore, based on what this machine will earn I would be justified in asking you to pay 5 times \$870, or \$4350. Yet I offer it to you for only \$297. Can you afford not to buy it? In justice to your family, to your wife, and your little children, can you afford to miss this opportunity?"

This argument, so unanswerable, so overwhelming, was the invention of the late John H. Patterson, of the National Cash Register Company, one of the boldest and most original fellows ever seen in American business, the discoverer of Service, of the Scientific Approach, of Pep—the high priest of Rotary, the sire of Kiwanis. Patterson standardized and romanticized the lowly office of the old-time drummer. He invented the Scientific Salesman. He invented the Sales Manual. He invented nine-tenths of the arguments that his disciples and imitators now play upon you when they seek to sell you automobiles, thermostats, wire lath, hail insurance, chicken wire, radio outfits, envelope lickens, cellarettes, dog collars, tungsten-steel safes, unbreakable wind-shields, towel

service. And he did the job completely; he overlooked nothing—no imaginable resistance, no conceivable emergency. A salesman who emerged from his seminary came out complete and perfect, ripe and irresistible. I quote some specimen strophes from his own Sales Manual. The prospect, a corner grocer, has objected to buying a cash register on the ground that it costs too much—that the company makes too much profit. The salesman *loquitur*:

I really don't know how much profit we make on this or any other register, and I do not believe that anyone could possibly ascertain with accuracy just how much it is.

For the sake of argument, however, we will admit that it is *all* profit; that this register which we sell for \$500 costs nothing.

If this is true, our profit on this \$500 register is \$500. You will admit that it cannot be more.

That settles the profit the Company makes on the sale of this \$500 register.

Now, let's see what *your* profit is:

If the register saves you \$1 a day, it will save you, in round numbers, \$300 the first year.

The Company's profit at the end of one year, therefore, is \$500, and yours \$300, the Company having made \$200 more than you.

At the end of the second year, your profit is \$600 and the Company's only \$500.

You, therefore, are \$100 ahead of the Company.

In ten years your profit will be \$3,000, while the Company's profit still remains at \$500, and you are \$2,500 ahead.

As a matter of fact, then, it is not a question of how much the Company makes, but of how much *you* make.

III

John H. Patterson hoped to live more than one hundred years. He died in May, 1922, at seventy-eight. Even so, he lived too long. His contributions to American business science had been so widely applied by the time he died that their origin had been forgotten.

Patterson really did not get into action until he was past forty. He was in the full glory of his career at sixty-five, when the United States government placed him under arrest and convicted him of violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. Following the Dayton flood, this conviction was upset by the Supreme Court. By the time he was seventy his personality was already becoming a memory. His quota system,

his Hundred-Point Club, his standard demonstration, his salesmen's conventions, his conferences, his training school, his endless tricks to excite vanity, competition, and hard-hitting among salesmen, had been taken over by all other Americans of his trade and calibre. Imitation Pattersons had sprung up like dandelions. Yet none ever equalled the father of the race. George F. Babbitt was one of the progeny, but he was crossed with a moron, and lacked his sire's daring and originality.

When Patterson first appeared on the business horizon the telephone was a rarity, the card index was still unknown, the adding machine had not been invented, the typewriter was still but little used. Business is said to move in cycles. During a period of falling prices, money is made by thrift, by tight-fisted economy, by saving pins and using the insides of envelopes for note-paper. On the rebound, when prices are moving upward, money is made by daring expenditures, by expansion, by quick action, by scrapping old machinery, by plunging. Patterson led the way through an era of rising prices. By temperament he was ideally suited to the spectacular. He spent money lavishly. His factory in Dayton looked like a university. His foundry was vine-clad. His smoke stacks glistened like a Childs' restaurant.

It was my privilege to be called to Dayton in 1915. I survived one year and was then returned to normal life as unexpectedly as I had been lifted out of it. In that year I had an opportunity to study Patterson at work, at play, at dinner, at breakfast, at luncheon, in the saddle, on foot, at conventions, and finally on the Battle Creek rubbing table. He was not the silent, uncommunicative millionaire of romance. He did not sit in his office and plot great coups. He was a man of action, action, action! He loved the telegraph. He liked fast automobiles, the Twentieth Century Limited, long-distance telephone calls, five-day liners. He worked on his feet. He could not think without a sheet beside him, to diagram his thoughts.

The cash register was the passion of his life, a monument in the building of which he took infinite delight. His interests never wandered; he kept his eye always on his own register. He had a newspaperman's instinct for building a story. He dramatized everything, even the dying wails of his competitors. He bought up their machines, heaped them into a huge mound, and labelled it "The Graveyard." When ground was broken for the present plant of the National Cash Register Company on the hill overlooking Dayton, John H. drove an ax into a fence post and announced melodramatically that it marked "the centre of population of the United States."

He made a romance even of his own life. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, was graduated from Dartmouth College, and in partnership with his brother, acquired extensive coal properties in southern Ohio, all operated successfully. In 1882 he heard of the cash register, the invention of one James Ditty of Dayton. According to his own story, he ordered two by telegraph for the coal company's store. Following their installation, the store showed its first profit; apparently what had been the clerks' gain had been Patterson's loss. Shortly thereafter Patterson the coal operator became Patterson the manufacturer through the purchase of the National Manufacturing Company. But in reviewing all this for visitors to the Dayton factory, the cash register king made a few changes. He was "born in a log cabin," "worked as a barefoot boy along the Ohio canal" and "was graduated from the university of hard knocks." That was as he would have liked it.

To understand Patterson and his philosophy it is essential to remember that he had absolutely no sense of humor. He did have a biting sarcasm, but to him nothing was funny. He never laughed. Long before the World War he bought American flags by the gross. Poles stuck out like porcupine quills from the buildings at Dayton.

"Today the flags are flying in honor of

our distinguished visitor, Dr. Frank Crane," the bulletin boards announced, and, looking up, one saw 30 or 40 flags waving in the breeze. The next day: "To-day the flags are flying in celebration of the sale of the one-millionth cash register."

The crowning event of his career, perhaps, was the salesmen's convention held at the factory in the Autumn of 1915, to herald the return of good times after a bad year. All the salesmen—about 800—were called to Dayton by wire. Following a three-day revival in "The Schoolhouse," a Grecian temple erected for such gatherings, they were escorted to the railroad station by the 5000 factory employes. It took one hour and seventeen minutes for the line, marching four abreast, to pass the downtown N. C. R. City Club. Six bands and half a dozen drum corps were in the parade. Department heads and leaders among the selling force rode horses. President Patterson led the procession on foot, carrying a flag. Following him were the salesmen, in white trousers and white hats, also carrying flags. The factory divisions followed, each man waving a red torch, and each woman a sparkler.

This monumental exhibition of the go-get-'em spirit was duly chronicled in the company house-organ and in the local newspapers, marked copies of which were mailed broadcast. From my files I exhume the following encomiums, reported as "heard along the side line during the parade":

This surely looks like old times again.

This certainly ought to back up Mr. Patterson's "Business is Booming" talk.

This is the finest, highest-grade, and most intelligent lot of men and women I ever saw in my life.

This is the biggest commercial demonstration that was ever pulled off in any city—either here or anywhere else.

Of course, this was a big party, even for Patterson, but it was in no way unusual. He organized a Country Club for his employes at which huge entertainments were given throughout the Summer. Once each year he invited the entire population of Oakwood, a suburb of Dayton, to Far

Hills, his home, where all were served at a barbecue. Often he took a party of forty or fifty men to New York, renting an entire floor at the Waldorf. He sent men around the world and fired them by cable.

Firing men, indeed, was one of his chief delights. He liked new faces. If you had ambitions to keep your job it was fatal to attract the attention of John H. You might find yourself suddenly promoted from tutor in his household to vice-president of the corporation, as did an English schoolmaster. But you knew you couldn't last—and the schoolmaster didn't. He went to Australia on "company business" and never came back.

Patterson made cash register salesmanship highly theatrical. The machines he most fancied were ornamented like Luna Park merry-go-rounds, and then given a gold or silver finish. When the keys were pressed they made a noise like an automobile starter. A bell rang. The alarm made an instantaneous appeal to the saloon-keepers who for years had been robbed by their bartenders. Little salesmanship, in fact, was required in this market, but when the general retail field was entered special training became necessary. Patterson therefore opened a school for his salesmen. Here the art of exchanging a cash register for a merchant's notes became a science. So perfected did the sales talk become that in their off hours at conventions the star salesmen, for relaxation, would show the cubs how to sell a thousand dollar register to a bootblack. In those days a cash register was a certificate of prosperity, as an automobile is today, and Patterson made the most of it. He invented the quota system for salesmen and organized a Hundred-Point Club to which star salesmen elected themselves.

When he was well past middle age Patterson had serious trouble with his digestion. He heard of Battle Creek, bran, spinach, vegetarianism, olive oil, raw carrots, nuts, steam baths, coco oil rubs, horseback riding, no-breakfast diets. Always he reasoned, "What is good for

me is good for everyone." Once he had quit meat he could not bear to see anyone else eat a chop. He rode horseback one morning at five and felt fine. *Ergo*, all department heads must ride. The horses were ordered and the stables built. For a few months everyone, lean and fat, rode horseback, the squadron being preceded by a trumpeter. He canceled the order as suddenly as he had issued it. One night the horses and all trace of the stables disappeared.

Although, as I have said, Patterson did not use his own office at all, yet he deemed it essential that his assistants be housed in elaborate quarters. The suite which I occupied was as spacious as a western prairie. A glass partition separated me from my secretary. Adjoining this office was a large private bathroom. However, I did not use this, for I preferred another bathroom where three men were regularly employed to assist us in taking baths and to rub us down.

Every morning a man in white uniform visited my office and spread a snowy white napkin on a small table on which he placed a large bottle of distilled water and a glass, removing the unused bottle, napkin and glass placed there the previous day. I also was visited each day by a boot-black in white uniform. I was of an age when it appealed greatly to me to dictate to a secretary, answer the telephone and have my shoes shined all at the same time.

Visitors were often aghast at the seeming extravagance, which was exactly the impression he desired to make upon them. They were told: "It pays." I suppose a certain part of it did. It caused the cash register company to be talked about. Smart young men were attracted to the ranks of its salesmen.

Patterson's neighbors in Dayton thought he was "crazy." Most of his employes were sure he was "crazy." Yet, when they had been fired they found that it paid to follow his methods, in whole or in part. Whether it paid or did not pay, Patterson could afford it, and he got the same thrill

from it that some men get from supporting a musical comedy troupe. He believed that business offered an opportunity for complete self-expression. For him it did. He related everything to the making and selling of cash registers. It was typical that he should charge the entire cost of his Dayton relief work to company expenses. His expense accounts sent needles into the spines of minority stockholders; he even dismissed sales agents because their expense accounts were not large enough. Nothing was so offensive to him as the failure of a representative of the National Cash Register Company to dress and conduct himself in a manner becoming his chief, that is, extravagantly.

Life for him must move at a high tempo. He was an idealist within the sphere of his genius. He bred a race of near-Pattersons, but none has ever risen to the heights attained by this master of jazz.

IV

The New Business has sprung from his personality. Pep specialists, sales engineers, psychologists, statisticians, researchers, laboratorians, surveyors and counsellors now reach hundreds of thousands of business men each week with the Great Message. Their audience is the membership of the Advertising, Rotary, Kiwanis, Exchange, Lions, Gyro and Optimist Clubs. This year the Associated Advertising Clubs of the World will hold its convention in London, and thus its civilizing influence will be projected overseas. The program of a convention includes parades, community singing, battles royal, oratory, music, prayers, fireworks and hula-hula dancing. Frequently the pulpits of the convention city are assigned to the visiting delegates on the Sunday preceding the convention. The walls of St. Paul's may reverberate with new echoes next July!

The program of the local clubs calls for a weekly noonday talk. Some hold beauty contests among their members, requiring the candidates to do æsthetic dances and

pose as "The Dying Bootlegger." A committee of telephone operators and stenographers usually judges the contest. In the event that a speaker fails to keep his appointment a favorite form of recreation is for each member to lie on his back and kick a basketball with his feet. At Thanksgiving and Christmas the custom is for each member to bring a newsboy or an orphan to the meeting for a big feed—turkey an' cranberries 'an' everythin', as the secretary says in his announcements.

The range of speakers at the meetings includes poets who recite sentimental verses, efficiency experts, Episcopal deans, trick artists, best-seller authors, Dr. Frank Crane, Charles M. Schwab, talking dogs, Roger W. Babson, Walter M. Camp (who discovered the great principle of the Daily Dozen) arctic explorers, and defenders of Hollywood. These meetings are designed to fit a man for an afternoon of hard work. They usually last from noon to 2 P. M.

Underpaid professors have found a lucrative source of income by talking to these groups on Service and Psychology. One professor has a speech in which he explains the favorable psychological effect of placing a needle and thread on the bureau in every bedroom in a hotel, of giving away a morning newspaper to every guest, and of providing signs which may be hung on the door, reading "Do not disturb." The professor shows how these little touches convert an unattractive \$2 room into a \$4 room. Another sure-fire talker is an eminent student of human behavior who "recently completed two years of research in Switzerland." His theory is that you can make people do anything if you understand the "principle of motivation." This speaker illustrates his talks with hand-drawn charts of the human brain and spinal column.

Often a "go-getter" is scheduled, some man who has increased his sales of leather vests from \$33,000 to \$526,455.12 a year by devising a mah jong contest. These fellows usually have hairy fists and punctuate every paragraph with a couple

of "damns" and a "hell." Then there is the man who has formulated the scientific laws of advertising. He says that by testing your copy as he prescribes you can determine scientifically the number of suckers in each 1000 of the population that it will fetch. If the percentage is a paying one your copy is o.k., after which your problem resolves itself into deciding whether to spend the winter in Florida or on the Riviera.

Raising three or four million dollars for a community fund is a short morning's work for these live wires of the New Business. The old-fashioned minister and college president went out into the strange world and begged, accepting gifts humbly and gratefully. Under the new system charity and philanthropy are "sold" to "prospects" and each "salesman" has his "quota." "Hard nuts" are reported and are given special attention by a "wrecking crew." Years ago Patterson asserted that his methods could be applied to every field of human activity, including the ecclesiastical. "What is good for us is good for everyone," he argued. In a few hours, following the Dayton flood, he raised two million dollars for the rehabilitation of the city. As the dollars were subscribed they were rung up on an enormous cash register.

That he was a prophet is clear. The Y. M. C. A., the Boy Scouts and the Go-to-Church movement are merchandised today like breakfast foods. In an open letter, published in an advertising journal recently, Samuel Gompers was advised to modernize the labor movement by substituting advertising and up-to-date marketing schemes for the crude methods now employed to get higher wages. No one has yet suggested a Back to Common Sense Week but the proposal may be expected at any moment. It will be merchandised, when it comes, by means of brass bands, essays by school children, floats, lapel buttons, window displays, special movie films, four-minute speakers, and syndicate newspaper articles by Mary Pickford and Judge Elbert Gary.

SPANISH NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENT

BY C. E. BECHHOFFER

MY VISIT to the first of the theatres that I propose to mention was unpremeditated. I had not meant to go out that evening. It was a few weeks ago in Seville, and I was sitting quietly with an English friend and his wife in the lounge of our hotel, commenting on the sharp coolness of the air—the optimism of architects in Southern Spain is inclined to rule out heating appliances or to reduce them to almost purely theoretical proportions—and reading, as well as my primitive knowledge of Spanish allowed, a current copy of the weekly comic paper *Buen Humor*, in which I was delighted to find this illustrated variant of a witticism of earlier days:—

The Traveler: Hallo, Pascuala, where can one find your husband?

Pascuala: Well, he will be now in the *corral* with the pigs; he is the one who wears a little hat of straw.

A waiter came to our table and, asking us if we wished to visit the theatre, laid on our table the printed slips which in this part of the world do duty both as advance announcements of plays and as programs of them. It ran as follows:

Theatre of San Fernando

Official Company
of the Spanish Theatre of Madrid
of
Ricardo Calvo

Principal actresses:
Carmen Seco and Josefina Roca
Principal comedian:
Fernando Porredon

Program for Today

1. Symphony
2. First Performance of the fairy-tale in a prologue and three acts, divided into fourteen scenes, *original* of Don Jacinto Benavente.

LA CENICIENTA

Represented by this company, in the Spanish Theatre of Madrid, more than THREE HUNDRED consecutive times.

There followed the list of characters and scenes and the prices of seats, ranging from thirty pesetas (roughly five dollars) for boxes, and ten pesetas for stalls, to seventy-five centimos for "entradas de 2.a grada." The play, or rather the symphony that preceded it, was to begin at half past nine.

We discussed whether we should go. My friend and I were anxious to see an example of the work of one of the latest Nobel prize winners; neither of us knew more of his plays than was to be learned from the three volumes in English published by the Scribners. My friend's wife, a student of Spanish, declared that Benavente was sordid and cynical—did he not say, for instance, that "Art is the one subject on which aristocracy and democracy agree; both invariably vote for folly and vulgarity"?—and that she did not propose to ruin her evening by watching one of his dramas. It is true that neither she nor we had heard of his "La Cenicienta"—which we were careful to pronounce lispingly as *Thenithienta*—but when we discovered from some Spanish informants that this meant "something like Cinderella and the ugly sisters," she insisted that this was too sacred a subject to be profaned by sordidness and cynicism, and left us to put on our hats and coats and go to the theatre by ourselves.

We were directed through the Sierpes, the paved and winding street which, closed to all but pedestrian and donkey traffic, forms the centre of Sevillian life.

Little groups of Spaniards in dark suits and huge-brimmed Andalusian hats were standing there in talk or watching their more aristocratic fellows stare at them from comfortable armchairs behind the plate-glass windows of the clubs and the still more luxurious citizens who were being publicly shaved in the barbers' shops; the bars of "The Four Corners of San Juan" and the "Toro" taverns with the stuffed bulls' heads on the walls were crowded with customers; and an ambitious grocer, prepared for the anticipated invasion of an American tourist party and taking us for its forerunners, rushed out of his shop and thrust the following English handbill into our hands:—

HISPANO-AMERICAN SHOP

Best Old Wines

Americans! Americans! Malaga wine. Do not sail without it. When you are sorry or weary drink this gold wine and it will be your best companion. Keep some of it for your friends and family. The best wine for presents. Brought directly from Malaga. If you buy a bottle you will buy ten, so good you will find it.

We reached the theatre at last and, buying two stalls, entered the cool building. It was already half past nine, but there were few people present, although from the rattle of conversation and the rustling of the newspapers one might have thought the place full. On each side of the stage there was a large advertisement of a popular laxative, and the lowered curtain itself was covered with similar announcements. Even the footlights bore in huge letters the name of the electrician who had installed them. We were also warned against pickpockets. The orchestra's piano and half a dozen chairs belonging to the musicians were deserted, but on each side of them sat a fireman in his brass helmet, phlegmatically smoking cigaretts and throwing the burning stubs on the wooden floor. Little boys passed down the aisles, shouting "Caramels, caramels," or offering lottery-tickets; but they soon became weary and

put their wares down on the front row of stalls, immediately before us, and sat on them, the better to enjoy the coming spectacle. They kept their caps on to maintain their official position. At about ten o'clock two gentlemen in derby hats climbed over the barrier and sat down at the piano, talking to the firemen. A quarter of an hour later the audience began methodically to clap and stamp, with the result that soon three more musicians in derby hats entered the orchestra and, suddenly snatching off their derbies, played a dozen bars of music; then, the "symphony" finished, they rammed their derbies on again and rushed out of the building as the curtain went up. Whenever during the course of the play incidental music was called for, the musicians returned to their places in the same hurried manner, removed their derbies and took up their instruments at the latest possible moment, reversing the process even more quickly when they had done their work.

II

Everybody now said "Shhhh!" to everybody else, and the prologue began with "The Three Magi," "The Sadness of the Prince," "The Fairy Fantasy" and "The Land of Illusion." My friend and I mustered our small understanding of Spanish and endeavored to appreciate the wealth of satire that we were sure lay behind the rather obvious awakening of Cinderella in her (double) bed by the spirit of Fantasy and the faded backcloths that portrayed the changes of scene. The strange thing was that we found we could understand almost everything that was said, and it appeared to us neither cynical nor sordid; nor, we noticed, did any of our heavily breathing neighbors or even the caramel-boys in front of us appear to be much moved by the speeches. True, there was one phrase we did not quite catch: it had something to do with liberty and drew a loud laugh from one of the boxes and two of the caramel-boys, but everybody else

took it calmly. When the curtain fell on the last of the four scenes of the prologue, I suggested to my friend that probably this was only a cynically simple overture to the sordid satire that was to follow, and we discussed which of the characters might be taken to personify Spain, the Bourbon monarchy, the military *juntas* and the other political references that might reasonably be expected.

The first act was preceded by a *pas seul* of the electrician, who hung out of a stage-box and excitedly changed a couple of lamps in the footlights. He was loudly applauded. The curtain rose again after a long interval—the orchestra rushing for cover as before—and we were introduced to Cinderella again, her parents and her ugly sisters, who were described on the program as “Las Preciosas ridiculas.” The third scene of the first act brought with it a finale by the whole company, including half a dozen small children dressed as monkeys, with tails and huge, grinning masks. These clasped hands and rushed ’round and ’round Cinderella until one of them let go and the rest of the half dozen piled themselves on top of him. This incident brought the house down in laughter until it was discovered that it was unrehearsed, the injured monkey arising in loud sorrow and running for comfort to his mother in the chorus. She soothed him and he returned after a short pause to his work, and the curtain descended for another interval. The audience calmly picked up its newspapers or went out for a drink, and my friend and I read astonishingly cynical meanings into what had gone before. To tell the truth, we were hopelessly befogged, but neither of us wished to confess it.

The second act carried on the story, still in the same obvious manner. The audience was roused to tremendous enthusiasm when Cinderella was shown in her pretty dress, off to the ball, under the supervision of the good fairy whom she had assisted to carry faggots in a previous scene and who now appeared to the weep-

ing damsel out of a kitchen cupboard. I cannot hope to describe the sumptuousness of the ball itself, but it provided a very fine closing scene, after which the boys did a roaring trade in their caramels, a little warm and sticky from being sat on for so long, and my friend and I continued our discussion of the symbolism of the play over a glass of sherry in a neighboring bar. We were quite lost; we had understood practically everything that had been said, and nothing had shown any sign of the sordidness, satire or cynicism we had expected. The jokes had been simple; the episodes without subtlety; and the audience had shown no signs of reading a deeper meaning into them. But surely, we said to each other, Benavente, the satirical, sordid cynic, would never have written a mere English pantomime version of the Cinderella story; nor could this have been played for more than three hundred consecutive times in the Spanish Theatre at Madrid. Besides, “Don Juan” was down for the following evening; and nobody had ever called that a pantomime!

It was about half past midnight when we returned to our seats, anticipating the derby-hatted orchestra's devastating progress down the central aisle. At one o'clock the curtain rose on the final act. We saw “The Fatal Hour,” with Cinderella (Mme. Carmen Seco herself) rushing in screams from the stage; then came the excruciating excitement of the Prince's attempt to find the owner of the crystal slipper. One of the ugly sisters (the charming Mme. Josefina Rosa) tried to cut half her foot off in order to get it on—although we could see that she could easily have put it on without this—and the other wanted to cut the slipper up. Cinderella's cruel step-mother also failed miserably in the test, much to the relief of the excited audience, which need perhaps not have worried very much, since she clearly could not marry the Prince when she was already in possession of Cinderella's henpecked father. Then amidst enormous applause Cinderella, the despised and browbeaten

outcast, fitted her foot into the slipper as if it had been made for her, to be embraced by the Prince, his courtiers and her own long-suffering father. One of my neighbors who throughout the evening had been reading the reports of the Madrid and Barcelona exchanges, even put down his paper to clap loudly at this point.

The last scene of all was the Apotheosis, the wonders of which are not to be told with a Nordic pen. It wound up with a grand procession of all the actors and actresses through the theatre and up a plank bridge onto the stage. The only flaw to this triumphal ending was due to the same little boy who had been unfortunate in an earlier scene. The poor child tripped up on the planks and fell into the orchestra, fortunately alighting on the derbies of the musicians, who picked him up amidst much laughter and lifted him onto the stage. And so, with loud chords on the piano and the double-bass, Cinderella was joined to the Prince in marriage, and the other characters paired off matrimonially. The chief actors took their calls; the unlucky little boy was consoled by a special appearance before the curtain; and we all put our hats on and went home.

It was about two o'clock by now, and my friend and I walked back to our hotel, still anxiously discussing the possibility of the play's being satirical, cynical and sordid. We could reach no really satisfactory solution. But his wife met us in the lounge and showed us in the preface of one of the volumes of the English translation of Benavente that in 1911 he, with Porredon the actor, had founded a children's theatre in Madrid or Barcelona. She was anxious to know whether the "Cinderella" we had just seen belonged to the satirical style of the author or whether she could safely send her little son to see it at the children's matinée announced for the forthcoming Sunday. We reassured her, and a highly delighted English boy was among the audience on the next occasion that the play was produced. It started at half past six in the

evening, and he was able to get home by ten o'clock! His father and I gathered that the satirical symbolism had escaped him also.

III

My next adventures in the theatre in Southern Spain were not, I fear, quite on a level with what I have described. I did not go on the following evening to the representation of Tirso de Molina's "Don Juan," chiefly because it seemed likely to last well into the morning; and for art that is so long, life is surely too short. Instead, I betook myself to the Salón Imperial and saw the following spectacle:—

Grandioso Programa Artístico

A Precios Populares

Orden del Espectáculo

1. *Sinfonía por el notable sexteto que dirige el maestro Emilio de Torre.*
2. *Gran Éxito de la elegante cancionista y ballarina LOLITA LIMARES.*
3. *Gran Éxito de la elegante y buena ballarina MATILDE USSONI.*
4. *Éxito de la bella y elegante cancionista CARMELITA CABALLERO.*
5. *Éxito Grande de la elegante cancionista JUANITA SAETA.*

artista enciclopédica

It was added that the last performer had a *lujoso vestuario*—a luxurious wardrobe.

Quite apart from the delights of hearing a notable sextette, I looked forward to witnessing the carefully differentiated performances of an "elegant singer and dancer," an "elegant and good dancer," a "beautiful and elegant singer," and a merely "elegant" singer who would, however, be also an encyclopedic artiste. I was not to be disappointed.

It would be tedious to describe the theatre, the audience, the cigarette-smoking firemen and the rapid and perfunctory "symphony" of the notable sextette. These were all pretty much the same as in the theatre on the previous evening.

The curtain rose on an empty stage, but behind the scenes there was a rattling of castanets, and soon a graceful girl came out, dressed in white with a Spanish

shawl flung round her and with a high white comb in her hair, through which the light shone upon the backcloth. She sang a song, wriggling her body and rattling the castanets and occasionally uttering the strange nasal notes that astonish the visitor to Spain. She finished her song and danced off, the audience showing no interest whatever in her, except for the small claque at the back of the hall, whose efforts were treated with indifference by everybody else. She soon returned, after signaling to the bored orchestra with her castanets, in a colored dress and a red comb. It may have been a better song this time, but the small boys selling caramels made more noise than she did; and again she moved off the stage unapplauded. But her third song, for which she wore a scanty dress of red frills, moved us all to enthusiasm. I do not know what it was about, but I could at least understand the first line of the chorus, which my neighbors occasionally interrupted their conversation to join in. It consisted of the stirring words—"Caramba, señore!" This time she had to return to bow her thanks for our applause; then after a pause she came back for her last appearance. She had changed into Andalusian dress, with a high, hard, full-brimmed felt hat and a blue-gray shawl. With a loud rattle of castanets and an accompaniment of "Olé, olé" from the audience, she danced vigorously, stamping with her heels and wheeling suddenly, all the time smiling proudly and enticingly at us. The curtain came down amidst much excitement.

The appearance of the "elegant and good" dancer was less successful. True, as became her goodness, she came out first dressed in white with a red rose in her girdle; but neither her song nor her dance was appreciated. As she left the stage for the first time, the claque applauded half-heartedly, but the more robust critics hissed heartily. Her two next dances went even worse; the orchestra, the notable sextette, chatted loudly to the firemen even while they played the tunes, and

the curtain fell a few seconds too soon, which pleased the audience more than anything that had yet happened. And when she danced a Red Indian dance, chasing and spearing imaginary animals in the wings, the audience hissed so fiercely that everybody had to go out for a drink during the interval that followed.

It was, I gathered, no accident that the next performer's name on the program contained no reference to her moral qualities. She sang four songs with a certain amount of success, won largely by a horrifying trick of raising her eyes until one saw the whites, and then dropping them with the opposite result. The louder she sang, the louder everybody talked, but she beat them all with her stamping, which was colossal. One song had an especial interest for a Spanish audience, which loves to be assured that Paris, Rome and even London are the seats of strange vices and frolics that the Spaniard knows nothing of.

And now came the star turn of the evening's entertainment, the encyclopedic artiste herself with the luxurious wardrobe. She proved to be a large lady, not unduly youthful, dressed in black with huge embroidered roses and with a veil over her bust and a large tortoise-shell comb. The orchestra greeted her with enthusiasm, but the audience fell into its habitual apathy. Only a few handclaps and hisses succeeded her first song. But she was waiting for us, just as we were waiting for her. Her next song was in the style of Marie Lloyd, whom she might have been studying; her clothes were the Parisian of the stage and her gestures the same. This went fairly well, but her next song, in which she played the part of a distressed young woman, was considered either not in good taste or not sufficiently well done. But when she came out draped with a huge Spanish flag of red and orange and sang a patriotic song with appropriately martial music, the audience rose at her, and one could hardly hear the hisses for the applause. The sextette played a few bars to see us out of the theatre; everybody

cleared his throat and went out into the night. It had been an absorbing, if not very thrilling entertainment. As at the theatre, there were almost no women present; and I concluded from the attitudes of most of the audience that they had come in rather to kill time than to be edified or even amused.

I cannot say quite the same for the music hall I went to at Malaga a few days later. Two British cruisers lay out in the bay, and Malagan society had had a roisterous afternoon dancing on the deck of one of them; it had been possible to approach a Spanish lady in the midst of her family and ask her to dance with you without even having been introduced to her father and mother and aunts and married sisters. Naturally an orgy of this kind required a long period of recuperation, and I was not surprised to find the town exceedingly quiet in the evening. However, the proprietor of the "Theatre of the Vital Spark" was determined not to succumb to the prevailing tedium, and together with a hundred Malagans I found myself witnessing a program that consisted chiefly of a troupe of German ladies in "living pictures," preceded by single acts in which they appeared individually and sometimes boldly sang songs in what they imagined to be Spanish. To tell the truth, I could understand their songs better than I could the more correctly enunciated variety, but the audience, sternly patriotic in its at-

titude to the language of its country, hissed them unmercifully. But when they appeared, much undressed, in classical, semi-classical and pseudo-classical groups, everybody took his cigar out of his mouth and murmured approval. But I did not find myself very appreciative.

If I found the Spanish music halls curiously restrained—for even the "living pictures" were discreet—I was to be still more surprised when I crossed the border and arrived in Rome a week or two later. For the Fascisti are engaged in a self-appointed mission to purify the dress, customs and spectacles of the Italian people. Ladies are not allowed any longer to appear in *décolleté* in a public place, and every music hall and theatre proprietor who wishes his entertainment to be a success seeks to arouse his audience by providing a lady who enters a box half an hour after the beginning of the show, takes off her wraps and discloses her shoulders and is then soundly hooted and driven out again. I saw this done on successive nights at two Roman music halls. The costumes of the artistes are also severely censored, and the only performer I saw who dared to show sufficient of the body to make possible the stomach dance—that unfailing attraction to a meridional audience—proved at last to be a boy disguised as a woman! He was, like most of the other turns, Arabs and all, a German.

THE AMERICAN VIEW OF POLITICS

BY JOHAN J. SMERTENKO

If I write a learned article on chewing gum I find that I lose my clientèle of readers who are toothless, because they naturally are not interested in chewing gum if they have no teeth. Then, when I write on politics, I find that the honest people are not interested.

THUS Will Rogers, like every other popular humorist, uses a truism as the foundation of his joke, and, again like every other popular humorist, he uses one that is old enough to be familiar even to readers of the Sunday supplements, and hence one that is false as well as old and ugly. Nevertheless, his witticism has had the support, at one time or another, of authorities of no little weight and dignity. The Progressives in 1913 and the reformers in 1900 put the political indifference of Americans among the chief causes of the corruption of our politics, and twelve years before the latter James Russell Lowell, then near the end of his life, complained to his fellow independents that "the men who should shape public opinion and control the practical application of it" among us had left all political activity in hands "that are not too delicate to be dipped into the nauseous mess." He added as a clincher: "I do not believe that there is a man at this table who, for the past twenty years, has been able to embody his honest opinion, or even a fraction of it, in his vote." Thirty years before that, indeed, Lowell, like the Abolitionists, had cried out against "all the dirty intrigues of provincial politics" and bemoaned the fact that no educated man regarded them. And even so early as 1837 Abraham Lincoln had felt it necessary to explain why the forces which roused

such zeal for politics during the Revolutionary period were dormant or dead.

But though it is thus justified by the opinion of the past, Mr. Rogers' joke is not substantiated by observation in the immediate present. Today the American has once more turned his attention to politics—not only the Ku-Klux-American Legion-Anti-Saloon League-American who has a gold brick to sell, nor the Irish-Jewish-German-Italian-American who has a special interest to protect, but also my honest country cousin-in-law who for more than two-score years has cast his Republican ballot on election day as proudly, as inevitably, and as arbitrarily as he has consumed his turkey on another day in November. Removed as he is in rural New York from the disquieting influences of the Farm Bloc, the Nonpartisan League, and the other progeny of Bad Times out of Progressivism, this septuagenarian seeks in his paper the news of political good works which will justify his unshaken faith in the Grand Old Party. And the signs are everywhere manifest that the natives of New York and San Francisco, Boise City and Covington, the Ozarks and Oshkosh have the same new and surprising interest in politics. The man in the street has added to his conversation on climatic mobility the equally profound discussion of congressional cachexias and presidential possibilities. In fact, this revival of interest is now so obvious that the press has detected and is recognizing it by devoting more columns to municipal, state, and national politics than to all the sports combined.

Hence we may expect to see the democrat, who has now and again denounced

the people for renouncing in practise those Rights of Man which they most avidly accept in theory, jubilant because his faith in them is once more indicated, and we may hear the demagogue, who has always flattered the mob, prophesy another Golden Age because Agoracritus the Sausage-seller at last rules the realm. But what shall the skeptical spectator conclude from this reversion to the political fervor which accompanied the founding of the Republic?

II

Possibly an examination of the historical and psychological springs underlying the political-mindedness of Americans will shed some light on the path they are likely to pursue, now that they are politically-minded again. Perhaps it may not be amiss to point out that although the American people are at last more exercised about politics than about the national pastime of baseball, yet the victory over baseball is not altogether complete. That our concern with politics differs from our enthusiasm for sports only in degree, not in kind, is constantly betrayed by the character of our party platforms and the inattention they receive from public and politicians, by the failure of candidates to offer any consistent, comprehensive policy regarding the local, national, or foreign problems which they must try to solve if elected, and by the absence of a distinct liberal or conservative attitude toward administrative problems. In this day of increasing and encroaching governmental paternalism there is not a single salient politician among us who champions state sovereignty or individual rights; at a time when every question of social, economic, and political adjustment is to the fore there is—Prohibition excepted—no coherent system of reform, no matured legal program, presented for public approval.

One could continue indefinitely piling up proof that politics in the United States, like horseracing, is still an individual competition for honors and stakes. But

this has been done often enough by the critics I have mentioned and by others. Critical opinion is thoroughly agreed that politics, in the sense that Plato or Locke or Jefferson understood the term, we have not. We have not politics even in the sense that the contemporary European chancellors understand it. For over there the intrigues and enmities in which each nation is involved force every padishah to formulate and announce a genuine political attitude, at least on foreign affairs. Here, with two boundaries guarded by powerful oceans and the other two made secure by weak and outnumbered neighbors, we have troubled no more about a policy of international relationships than about a program of domestic legislation. Thus the American people have not even remotely associated politics with statecraft; they have confined it simply to competition for office.

Now, our valiant, if violent, defenders of democracy have pressed these points before; they incorporated them in their earliest attacks upon the American party system, which they regarded as the root of all our political and social evils. James Russell Lowell thus summed up the case: "The tricks of management are more and more superseding the science of government. Our methods force the growth of two kinds of politicians to the crowding out of all other varieties,—him who is called *practical*, and him of the corner grocery. Both parties have been equally guilty, both have evaded, as successfully as they could, the living questions of the day." And elsewhere he called the political bosses, "flesh-flies that fatten on the sores of our body politic, and plant there the eggs of their disgusting and infectious progeny." Charles Edward Russell put it more concisely when he coined the phrase, "Our invisible government." But the eloquence of such critics has been sterile, for it was directed against the tail which they believed to be wagging the dog.

The writer believes that the responsibility for the chaos of our polity rests

directly on the character of the American people,—and that the factors which perpetuate in an empire the electoral and administrative conditions suitable to village government reside in a variety of political-mindedness that is peculiar to our country. His aim, therefore, is not to repeat the ancient indictments against an ailing state but to chart the sources of infection, not to describe symptoms but to seek out the responsible germs, not to hawk aged specifics but to disclose the reasons underlying the constitutional vulnerability.

III

Temperamentally the American is a pragmatist. Latterly this turn of mind has been labeled single-track, but it may be more aptly likened to the local train which uses that single track. It is the one-station-at-a-time mind to which Coytesville is as important as Metropolis, and which has neither goal nor terminus, but simply a continuous oscillation. This mind is not concerned with vice and virtue in the abstract; it knows wrong only as concrete, demonstrable evils and right as concrete, probative benefits. It cannot focus on problems and programs, but it is quick to see grievances and advantages. It shies at visions, policies, and Utopias, but it rides triumphant over "practical" details, difficulties, and obstacles. Political philosophies, like those of Aristotle, Hobbes, or Marx, are indeed foreign to America—not because they were conceived on the other side of the Atlantic but because they predicate a mode of thought which has not yet crossed the ocean.

That this tendency to view the questions which incessantly confront life as particular and unrelated rather than as connecting links in "this sorry scheme of things entire"—that this habit manifests itself in our political misadventures is obvious. It is not too much to say that the temperament responsible for it is most evident in politics, whether in the perpetual fallacy of a "good man" vote or in the ephemer-

eral issues which shut out the possibility of systematic reform, and that by virtue thereof no body of electors in the world is so constantly the victim of red herrings drawn across the trail of progress as are those of the United States. In other fields much may be said in favor of this attitude of mind. Science and industry, organization and invention bear witness to the value of an automatic psychological adjustment to life—but not politics!

In politics, the negative as well as the positive side of the passion for the palpable has effects that can only be detrimental. Everywhere the masses are susceptible to—in fact, are governed by—shibboleths and moral swear-words; in the United States, alas, this is not characteristic solely of the mob. By the otherwise reflective classes, too, all novel political theory is made part of that dreaded abstraction, radicalism. Here I do not refer to the propaganda, the perversions, and the forgeries that are consciously let loose to foment a senseless fear of and a violent prejudice against a particular bogey, such as Bolshevism or the I. W. W.; I mean simply the honest, conscientious, and well-meaning antipathy to any consideration of politics which implies the possibility of change along rational lines, that is constantly manifested on the editorial page of the Main Street newspaper.

For, in addition to the colorful plots to ruin the Republic, and turn it over to the Soviets which are featured in the metropolitan press, the Gopher Prairie *Intelligencer* prints diatribes of its own manufacture against a whole corps of "anarchistic socialists" who are alleged to be undermining American society. The sum of these is that all criticism of existing evils, no matter how well founded, is Bolshevism, that to insist on the rights guaranteed by the Constitution is unpatriotic, that to propagate the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence is treason. What wonder that the very word reform has become a red blanket to the populace and that the reformer is

conceived as a mad mullah of fiendish purpose! As for the political theory attacked, let it be the life work of the best thinkers of a generation: it is condemned nevertheless as the vagary of a weak mind. Though it may be more antagonistic to other programs of reform than to the present social order, it is described in the same terms and denounced by the same epithets as the theories it supplants or opposes. Thus the man in the street learns that all protagonists of new theories, of whatever sort, believe in free love, wear dirty linen, carry bombs, and grow their hair in an immoral fashion!

It is impossible to overestimate the rôle of the bugaboo in the tragi-comedy of political evolution. *Ochlos* has always advanced like the swimmer, by pushing away what he fears will engulf him, save that the swimmer employs his energy purposefully and directs his course intelligently, whereas the mob flings its arms about in a frenzy, careless of its destination so long as it is beating off the waves. All American popular leaders, from Patrick Henry to Theodore Roosevelt, have been shrewd enough to recognize this phenomenon and to exploit it. The latter, in fact, was a very Dr. Faustus in conjuring up devils to frighten the mob. And now government by hysteria has become a political science, so that the people of the United States, once pioneers in democracy, have begun to dismiss in terror every new political theory offered to them.

How peculiar this attitude is to our politics may be seen by comparing it with our characteristic position toward reform in other fields. Whereas in Europe there is an enormous class of senile and sentimental persons who are troubled as much by the invention of a new loom or wine-press as by the formation of a new social organization, and upon whom the idea of innovation operates as a sort of moral and intellectual incubus, suspending all their faculties and awakening all their fears, in America there is none so old nor so sot in his ways as to cease his genuflections

to our great fetish, Progress. "Watch us grow!" is the slogan of town and church, trust and college, and the most radical innovations in airplanes and roach powders, breakfast foods and stock exchange manipulations are presented with pride and taken on faith.

This inconsistency in our point of view is undoubtedly due to the widespread ignorance of governmental machinery among us, an ignorance which amounts to a protective instinct. For your yokel dreads a thing of moving gears and pistons. He absolutely will not monkey with the works if the works throb and pulsate with life. Therefore, he eschews the investigation of our complex political apparatus as long as the mechanism is in action, no matter what may be its slackness, inefficiency, and expense. Americans have been content to wind the political clock every so often and to let the rest take care of itself. They have not dared to overhaul it when it was obviously out of order for fear of making a chaos of its wheels and balances. And they have resented the courage of those who offered to do the work for them.

IV

Unfortunately, this temperamental inclination to regard politics as complex and unintelligible has been abetted by the fact that until this generation the frontier and the wide open spaces knew government as something technical, superfluous, and far-removed. The social contract was not enforced by due process of law. When the crime against society was immediate and important, like horse-stealing, the community invoked the rope of Judge Lynch; when the sin was abstract or trivial, like denying God, the culprit was ridden out of town or treated to a round of drinks.

This conception of the inadequacy of a thing so remote and complex as government to enforce elemental and immediate law and order is even now illustrated by the Ku Klux Klan. After all, the pioneer went pioneering, not because he wished

to found a new commonwealth but because he desired to escape the constraints of the old one. He went upon his quest in the spirit of the Irishman who, on learning that America also had a government, promptly declared, "Thin I'm agin it!" After the Revolution, inspired by the idealists who were intoxicated with the joy of creation, he took his politics seriously and enthusiastically, but not for long. The hatred of Bumbledom soon reasserted itself and has been carried on to the present day as a repugnance or indifference to or incomprehension of the administrative mechanism. Whether the present revival of interest in politics may resolve this obvious "complex" or whether it will simply spend itself in a campaign of more than usual strenuousness is a matter of speculation, but there can be no doubt that until this antagonism to the intricacies of government is dissipated, politics will not rise among us much above the level of a battle for office.

Similarly, our economic background perpetuates an indifference to political theory. People are moved "to alter their former Systems of Government . . . and to provide new Guards for their future security" less by the pabulum in their heads than by the absence of nutriment in their bellies. Compared to Europe, America has indubitably been a land of plenty as well as a land of promise. Its spaciousness and opulence have fostered a belief that El Dorado should be sought by change of place rather than by change of government. Although today the growing stratification of American society, due to the appropriation and exploitation of our virgin resources and the concentration of wealth, is constantly narrowing the margin of security for the future and widening the space between life on Primrose Avenue and that in Railroad Alley, the sense of well-being hangs over from the past and makes the American people as averse to action as a replete lion.

Moreover, "abstract liberty, like other mere abstractions, is not to be found.

Liberty inheres in some sensible object." In America, as in England, continues Edmund Burke, this object has ever been taxes. ". . . The great contests for freedom in this country were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing." Now, our system of taxation today is so skilfully indirect that those who, absolutely as well as relatively, pay most are least aware of it. This failure to recognize who is carrying the burden of our enormous administrative expenses is another cause for the general apathy toward systematic reform in administration. Incidentally, it is also the reason for the lack of responsibility revealed in the individual's relations with our institutions. In the army, in the civil service, in every department of government we find that the ethical sense is dulled. We daily learn of misappropriations and unwarranted expenditures with indifference. There is no sense of proprietorship in their government on the part of the people.

More subtle in its operations but no less effective in its results than the temperamental or economic prejudice against the view that the United States government is a living organism, and, hence in need of scientific culture, is the sublimed conception of America as something poured into a mould formed by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. This misconception gives to the political organization of the United States a fixity that is almost unknown elsewhere. The distinguishing marks of the American are the political concepts that he has adopted rather than the customs he has developed. The Frenchman remains a Frenchman whether his government be an absolute or limited monarchy, a directory or regency or republic, but the American is at present inseparable from the democratic dogma. But all this though it is true, is not one of your eternal verities. It is a truth simply because America is a nation still in the formative stage, because the American still lacks those qualities which are derived from immemorial custom and

diuturnal habitation in a single land. And, as such, it is a truth growing less true every day.

The significance of this situation, and its bearing on American politicalmindedness, becomes apparent when we recall that nations are always wont to idolize and worship their own distinctive characters. But it is one thing to take abstractions like "English liberty," "*Kultur*," or "*esprit*," or delusions like "chosen people" or "Nordic blond" and make fetishes of them; it is another thing entirely to make idols of such pure instruments of service as are the two charters of Americanism. For in the first case the abstraction can always be reinterpreted and thus changed in accordance with the changing needs or ideals of its worshipers, whereas in the second the concrete documents must either be violated to conform with the actual life of the people or they must arrest the national development. That they are violated any schoolboy who has learned the Bill of Rights and the other amendments to the Constitution knows very well; that they also arrest political progress in America should be equally obvious.

Not merely the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution specifically, but democracy in general, so far as it is an institutionalized creed rather than an actuality, is prejudicial to sound political thought or action. It is characteristic of all institutionalized creeds, whether religious, aesthetic, or political, that their form and ritual tend to supplant their purpose and meaning. When an action or ceremony becomes traditional, the individual is apt to forget or ignore its original import and to attach that importance to the mere performance of the action or ceremony. The American people were lately on the point of making the exercise of the rights of citizenship a ritual pure and simple; in fact, the usual reason offered for party fidelity smacked suspiciously of an-

cestor worship. And it is a sufficiently sad commentary on the masses' use of the ballot that a few months ago Amos Pinchot repeated the ever-recurring proposal to organize a national campaign upon "one outstanding issue" because the nation's attention "cannot be concentrated on more than a single political idea at a time."

V

The difference between this attitude and the political alertness of the founders of the nation is illustrated in Burke's description of the Colonial mind. "In other countries," he said, "the people, more simple and of a less mercurial cast, judge of an ill principle in government only by an actual grievance; here they anticipate the evil, and judge of the pressure of the grievance by the badness of the principle. They augur misgovernment at a distance, and snuff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze." Today the change that has come with the years finds expression in the action of the Texas sheriff who sought a warrant for one Thomas Jefferson because he had written "some Bolsheviki propaganda," though it is seldom so truly revealed. Much more commonly the American idolater simply worships his country's Fathers, supremely unconscious of the ironic contrast between his demand for "practical" politics and their idealistic theory of popular government, with its rehashed philosophy of Locke, Rousseau and the radicals of the Revolution.

Whether he will ever become aware of this incongruity, and conform his ideas to his ideals or vice versa, is a matter for the future to determine. But at least we can be certain that America is not exempt from the tendency recognized by Machiavelli when he wrote: "All forms of human government have, like men, their natural term, and those only are long-lived which possess in themselves the power of returning to the principles on which they were originally founded."

THE THEATRE

BY GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

THE fact first. In "The Miracle," the combined talents of Max Reinhardt, Norman-Bel Geddes and Morris Gest have brought to the American theatre the most vividly impressive and thunderously beautiful spiritual spectacle, not that it has ever known—for it is too easy to say that—but, more, that it has ever dreamt of. These three men, the foremost active producing genius in the world, a young American scenic artist of rare talent, and a man who is the leading showman of his country, have realized, within the walls of what until yesterday was merely a millionaires' red and gilt dream of some transcendental bawdy-house, a super-theatre and in that super-theatre, imagined with a soaring fancy and made true with a remarkable panurgy, have lodged further what is beyond question the greatest production, in taste, in beauty, in effectiveness and in wealth of rich and perfect detail, that has thus far been chronicled in the history of American theatrical art. All the elements that go into the life blood of drama are here assembled into a series of aesthetic and emotional climaxes that are humbling in their force and loveliness. The shout of speech, the sweep of pantomime, the sob and march of orchestral music, the ebb and flow of song, the peal of cloister chimes, the brass clash of giant cymbals, the play of a thousand lights, the shuffle and rush of mobs, the rising of scene upon scene amid churning rapids of color, these directed by a master hand are what constitute this superb psychical pageant brewed from an ancient and familiar legend and called now "The Miracle."

The theatre that we have known becomes lilliputian before such a phenom-

enon. The church itself becomes puny. No sermon has been sounded from any pulpit one-thousandth so eloquent as that which comes to life, in this playhouse transformed into a vast cathedral, under the necromancy that is Reinhardt. For here are hope and pity, charity and compassion, humanity and radiance wrought into an immensely dramatic fabric hung dazzlingly for even a child to see. It is all as simple as the complex fashioned by genius is ever simple. There is in it the innocence of a fairy tale, and the understanding of all the philosophers who ever were. There is the sentiment that is eternally implicit in gentle faith, and the sternness that one finds always in the heart of beauty. It is, in its pantomime, as silent and yet as articulate as a tune that haunts one in the far confines of the brain. For such a melody, as we all know, can be heard distinctly by the ear of the mind, for all its being a prisoner in the cells of silence. The only trouble with a thing like "The Miracle" is that it induces in the beholder an eczema of adjectives and other parts of speech. It converts the critic into a mere honkhonk, or circus press-agent. It makes him glow, like a reformed chillblain. It deprives him of a certain measure of cool sense, as does beautiful music; but what the need of cool sense on such occasions? So complete is the spell of illusion which Reinhardt works that critical penetration is considerably blunted. Where, in other circumstances, one might conceivably be dumfounded at seeing in the aisles a procession of nuns that appeared to include Al Woods and Archie Selwyn, it here matters not in the least. Belated seat-searchers, aye, even Dr. John Roach

Straton himself, fail for a moment to diminish the pervading air of sanctity and piety. The spectacle is too long; it might be cut down to two hours with much profit. But as it stands it is still a triumphant contribution to the theatre. Never before has this legend that Karl Vollmöller has retold, that Engelbert Humperdinck has veined with melody, that Geddes has framed, that Reinhardt has worked his wonder on and that Morris Gest has brought to life for the American theatre taken on such grandeur. Many a Sister Beatrice and Sister Megildis, in literature and in drama, has found her place taken in an old gray nunnery by the Mother of God since first the legend grew, but never until now has the legend itself found *its* place taken in the temple of Thespis by such artists as these. They have served the legend as only real artists of the theatre could hope to.

The vagrant nun of the American girl, Rosamond Pinchot, is a youthful, vital and dramatically picturesque figure. The Madonna of Lady Diana Manners is well-composed and of tender suggestion compact. The lesser rôles are handled without flaw.

II

Never having shared the tumultuous enthusiasm of certain talented critics for the stunning genius of Clemence Dane, I am unable to share their tumultuous surprise over the stunning mediocrity of her most recent play, "The Way Things Happen." This essential mediocrity, for all its occasional concealment in a deftly turned line or phrase, has been clearly discernible in her work from the first. As between "A Bill of Divorcement" and "The Way Things Happen," there is little to choose. Both are third-rate, the former but slightly less so than the latter. And "Will Shakespeare" is at best a good attempt at what is in general a comparatively poor accomplishment. It is not difficult to penetrate the reasons for the critical approval of the last named play,

since there is a school of criticism that is ever hornswoggled by a play, however faulty, which treats of historical personages. All that one has to do to stir this school to high commendation is to take over some such old opera as "Mignon," cut out the music, rename Wilhelm Meister François Villon and the actress Filina Catherine de Vausselles, convert the gypsy chief Giarno into the priest Sermaise, make Mignon the daughter of the Duc Charles d'Orléans, have the estimable Deems Taylor compose a drinking song for the tavern scene, raise the height of the ceilings ten feet to give the necessary spacious air to the production, drop the curtain thirteen or fourteen times during the course of the evening (since a biographical play in the conventional number of acts would arouse the critics' suspicions), and craftily preface the whole business by sending to the critics, a week in advance of the opening and in plain envelopes, marked copies of the ecstatic notices from the London papers. It is true that there are several passages of excellent writing in Miss Dane's Shakespeare play. It is also true that there are several passages of excellent writing in the worst play of Percy MacKaye.

Clemence Dane, as I have once before observed, is a mild talent that postures a golden inspiration. Hers is the kind of playwriting that impresses one as being conscious and ever-mindful of its own importance. "A Bill of Divorcement" is nothing more than an ordinary play of commerce, of a somewhat remote vintage, given a contemporaneous feel by hitching it to a modern turn in divorce jurisprudence. "The Way Things Happen" is a mixture of Sardou and Henry Arthur Jones similarly given a contemporaneous feel by phrasing the passages concerning adultery with calm directness instead of in the old-time, roundabout, flossy manner and by causing the concupiscent villain to tell the heroine promptly and exactly what he is driving at instead of making him elaborately pave the way by having

Meadows serve a pâté and a magnum of Cordon Rouge and then chasing the poor girl around the table. Yet Miss Dane, for all the intrinsic banality of her materials, proceeds about her business with quite the same straight face and scholarly wrinkles that were affected by her fellow English genius of a decade and a half ago, the late Stanley Houghton. She appears to be as deeply impressed by her work as some of the rest of us are not. She is as intense as July heat, and frequently as enervating.

"The Way Things Happen," which is a fair example of the Dane craft, contains instances of adroit dramatic writing as do her other plays. But it is generally, so far as its dramatic materials and flavors go, a London Cohan Revue of 1895. She trots out all the favorite playwrights and dramatic stencils of the days when Shaw reigned and stormed in the pages of the *Saturday Review* and gravely—without the flicker of a Cohan smile—puts them once again through their paces. One by one they enter, under aliases that deceive no one, and go through their venerable parlor, drawing-room and bachelor-chambers tricks. Miss Henry Arthur Jones goes at midnight to the rooms of the wicked Sir Arthur Wing Pinero to get from him the papers that would incriminate the heroic young Sydney Grundy. She leaves behind her, in place of Oscar Wilde's pair of long white gloves, R. C. Carton's shawl, which is found by her jealous rival, the haughty Miss H. V. Esmond. Before, during and subsequent to this, the young juvenile in the blue serge jacket and white flannels, Hubert Henry Davies, bounces jovially in and out of the proceedings, the sweet, gray-haired Mrs. Augustin Daly, dear, kindly old soul, falls back in her chair and breathes her last even as she is smiling her happiness over the letter announcing that her son, absent these many years, is to return on the morrow, and the faithful old servant, Alfred Sutro, (in this instance a maid), offers with touchingly loyal lachrymation to stay on at the post for all the family's financial reverses. Nothing is

missing. Yet sweeping into this refuse of another generation there comes the young American actress, Katharine Cornell, with the finest talent among the new women of our theatre, and into it with that talent and all its ardor and fire and flame she burns something that for the moment seems lively and vital and very true. A rare and beautiful performance, as clear and as eloquent amid the encompassing dramatic shoddy as the sound of a loud horse-laugh in the House of Representatives. Tom Nesbitt brings to the rôle of the cad-hero all the tremors of his anatomy. He plays his big dramatic scene at the conclusion of the second act for all the world as if it had been written by La Belle Fatima.

III

Pirandello's dramatic themes are ever more interesting than his thematic dramas. Possessed of a much more fertile and analytical mind than any other South European writing at the present time for the theatre, he finds himself in the embarrassing predicament of evolving themes that either escape the dramatic form or, perhaps more exactly, the particular dramatic form that thus far has eluded his ingenious but defective butterfly net. Another instance of this is vouchsafed to us in his play, "Henry IV," produced locally as "The Living Mask." While it may be utterly ridiculous to say that a man may be too intelligent to write good theatre plays, it may not be too ridiculous to say that Pirandello's especial kind of intelligence prevents him from achieving good theatre plays. The ideas which his intelligence gives birth to are often above the homely plane of drama. They are at times no more suited to the dramatic form than would be the ideas implicit in Kant's "Foundation of the Metaphysics of Ethics," Goethe's "Introduction to the Propylæa" or a treatise on the *Bibos frontalis*. A sound dramatic idea must be generically transitive; it must move, so to speak, even before the dramatist touches it. The

dramatic ideas of Pirandello are essentially static. To make them seem to move at all, and in their moving produce a semblance of drama, it is necessary for him to have recourse to the propulsive agency of alien dramatic factors which in the very act of bequeathing a bit of slow motion to his undramatic ideas rob those ideas of much of their original power of static conviction. The effect is akin to making a moving picture out of Rembrandt's "Lesson in Anatomy." What remains is not composition, but de-composition.

A Pirandello play is less a play than a compromise with a play. It presents the picture of a group of actors in grease-paint hanging around a dissecting room. Actors give one the impression of being slightly out of place in the Pirandello drama. And not only out of place, but—sometimes—absurd. Pirandello thinks dramatically, it is clear, not in terms of a stage and foot-lights and performers, but in terms of an anomalous institution that is part clinic and part sideshow. The result, as I have said, is interesting, but chiefly if one closes one's eyes, listens attentively, and screws one's mind up the while to imagine that one is not in a theatre. "Henry IV"—with its theme of a man who in dementia believes himself to be head of the Holy Roman Empire and who, when once again after twenty years he regains his sanity, prefers to keep up the show of insanity as a refuge from the world that has grown harsh and ugly around him—is in this way infinitely more satisfactory to the ear than to the eye. The ear catches a neat-handed story of metaphysics and psychology; the eye sees only the mind of Pirandello trying grotesquely to hide itself in the body of a ranting and gesticulating actor. It is all very well to argue that the Italian is trying to fashion a new type of drama—actually, he is doing nothing of the kind—but before one sets out to fashion a new type of drama one must have known and forgotten the old.

Arthur Livingston's translation of the

original text is a dismaying performance. In an unintelligible attempt to make the translation sufficiently lively, he has caused the Italian characters periodically to indulge in the Broadway vernacular and has introduced into the Tuscan dialogue allusions to Kalamazoo, Mich., and the like. Arnold Korff, an excellent actor, misses almost entirely the subtleties of the central rôle, playing it with so elaborate an orchestration of all the ham attributes and idiosyncrasies as to give one the picture of Paul Whiteman playing King Lear.

IV

There is much to admire in Sutton Vane's "Outward Bound." It is one of those odd plays that comes along every once in a while and that, by virtue of its general complexion of grace and skill, persuades one theatrically that even its failings, like those of a winning child, are charming. The story is of an assortment of men and women who find themselves somewhat puzzlingly aboard a strange ship bound for they know not where and who gradually awaken to the realization that they are dead and on their way to whatever heaven or hell may be like. With what seems to me to be as shrewd a sense of dramaturgic values as has come out of the popular theatre of England in many a day, Vane relates this tale with a constantly surprising and enviable aptitude for foretelling his audience's every momentary turn of mood. His melodrama, sentiment, comedy, burlesque, irony and fantasy are dovetailed with a very deft talent indeed; each falls into place with an exact click; each avoids the slightest suggestion of pigeonholing; the handling of each is perfectly timed and with a most blithe and captivating unstudied air. If I were a playwright, I should envy Vane his uncommon gift in this uncommon achievement of theatrical effect. At bottom, his technic may be as old as the hills, but his particular talent lies in making it seem fresh and hearty and engagingly new, like

an old friend come back after a long absence. The pleasure of the evening is heightened by the knowledge that the job his theme offered him was anything but an easy one and by the further fact that he has triumphed over the difficulties that confronted him by taking the hardest road. The road of melodrama, the road of sentiment, the road of fantasy, the road of derisiveness, the road of comedy—each was open to him and each might have found a play at the end of it. But the road to a good play on this particular theme was not so smooth and straight, he appreciated. One would have to hoof them all, jump now and then from one to the other and again retrace one's footsteps as the theme elusively turned this way and that. This Vane has done. And out of the jigsaw he has evoked a sustained theatrical mood that marks a popular theatrical achievement of unusual quality.

The chief defects of the play, which actually disturb one very little while under its pleasant spell, lie in the author's Mother Goose point of view toward heaven and hell and in his strainful avoidance of dramatic climaxes. On the latter subject, I have already made discourse in another place. There I observed that the current prevalent fashion among dramatists of regarding a good, old-fashioned, rousing climax as something beneath dignity and artistic propriety is far from my own peculiar taste. When a dramatic climax has been foreshadowed and is rightly to be expected with high anticipation, it is thoroughly disturbing and disappointing to observe the playwright shush it off the stage and substitute for it a nonchalant, drawling allusion to the villain's spats. An effective climax is nothing to be ashamed of; the present-day practice of avoiding the realization of such climaxes to their full is the rankest affectation. In the matter of his heaven and hell, Vane makes the mistake not of failing to use his imagination, as his critics charge, but of using it. That imagination, like the imagination of most playwrights who

approach the same subject, were better left in peace. Its agitation is productive of dissent and dissatisfaction, and almost inevitably. Unless one be possessed of a very great poetic or ironic fancy, which Vane is not, philosophical explorations into the character of the hereafter may best be abandoned, especially in the theatre. When they are not abandoned, we are very likely to get such things as the Macphersons' "Happy Ending," which pictures heaven as a Pittsburgh millionaire's garden party, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which pictures it as a German Christmas card, and Vane's "Outward Bound," which reveals it to be something like a William Hodge play. Had Vane left the subject to his audience's imagination rather than to his own, his play would have been a better theatre play. The production is extremely well made—William Harris, Jr., has never shown finer editorial taste—and the presenting company, with Alfred Lunt as its outstanding figure, is from first to last excellent.

V

Genius, in the case of Strindberg, is the capacity for dramatizing infinite pains. There is no major ache, whether of psyche or toe, that does not claim its moment of his enthusiasm. Life, to him, is the panorama of a great and encompassing colic. His tragedy does not so much purge the emotions and leave in its wake the beauty that is ever the residuum of profound sorrow, as constipate hope, and resolution, and human faith. Where Ibsen is the mocking dramatist of tragedy, Strindberg is the tragedian of mocking drama. He looks on the world as a child looks at the skeleton of some prehistoric monster, simultaneously beset by awe and disbelief and seeking relief from its bewilderment in a nervous and unconvincing laughter. Like Ibsen, a rebel against the established dramatic technic of his time, the liberator of that technic from its retarding ball and chain, and a pioneer whose brilliant path-clearing made free

the way for the many who have followed in his steps, he is unlike Ibsen in that his technic is ever the slave-driver of his themes, beating down and weakening them with its tyrannical lash. The technic of Ibsen, to the contrary, is ever the offspring of his themes, rising naturally and inevitably out of those themes as the only medium for their capture and expression. Strindberg, with few exceptions, superimposes his technic arbitrarily upon his themes, where Ibsen permits his themes each to make up its own technic, so to speak, as it goes along. The close technical resemblances in various Ibsen plays are often merely superficial. But, almost without exception, the fundamental technical idiosyncrasies of Strindberg are visible in every one of his plays, sometimes to the complete confounding of the clarity of those plays.

Strindberg, on such occasions as his mind was still blessed with reason, wrote excellent drama, some of it of enduring life. On other occasions, after insanity had laid its grip upon him, he wrote what must frankly be set down as utter nonsense, the babbling of an idiot in whom one glimpsed pathetically but the distant rumors of a quondam genius. There are certain good-natured critics who cannot persuade themselves that it is possible for a man once possessed of a sharp and luminous intelligence ever to go completely mad, ever to lose all of his antecedent rationality, and it is they, as sympathetic artistically as they are misinformed pathologically, who are in their charity responsible for much of the amiable rubigo that clings to the critical appraisal of Strindberg and his drama. These critics were here and there again observable when "The Spook Sonata" was put on—admirably put on—not long ago in the little Provincetown Playhouse. The play in point, save for one or two mild flashes of the author's left-over insight, is the mere raving of a stark lunatic, a burlesque of intelligibility, a caricature of all sanity. If it were signed with the name of some Broadway play-

wright, even the waiters at the Algonquin Hotel would be seized with cramps from laughing. But because a celebrated name is attached to it, it is here and there viewed as being surely possessed of merit, however much that merit may be concealed from the naked eye. Of merit, it actually has nothing. It is a symposium of all the deficiencies of the sane Strindberg raised to the peak of imperfection by the insane Strindberg. It is a dramatization of the profound pains of mortal man in terms of dialectic pink pills. And to answer all this, as answer has been made, by saying that a mad and inscrutable world is best to be dramatized thus madly and inscrutably, is to say that only the idiot is capable of realizing and transmuting the poetry that lies in the tale of an idiot dancing down the wind. The heart and soul of genius may be mad, but the mind of true genius is ever as clear as the heavens seen through pine trees. Strindberg is occasionally a genius. But Strindberg is also occasionally an absurdly unconscious quack.

VI

Zona Gale's *Mister Pitt*, in the play of that name broadly derived from her novel "Birth," is less the authentic instance of character drawing that certain of my colleagues claim it is than an authentic instance of character drawing so intensified for theatrical purposes that its authenticity goes by the board before the play is half over. It appears to be Miss Gale's notion that, inasmuch as a play may run only two hours or so, everything that makes a character recognizable and convincing in a novel, all the little details and differences, all the little peculiarities and ramifications, must be packed tightly into one small bundle plainly marked on the outside with the character's one outstanding identifying trait, and the *reductio* offered to an audience, by way of getting the effect quickly and saving time, as the complete character. This procedure she has again followed in the case of her

dramatized Mister Pitt as she followed it in her dramatized Lulu Bett, with the upshot that her stage character is a character that never was on land or sea. Her Pitt is not a character so much as a characteristic: a single idiocrasy in trousers. There is no change, no development or disintegration, no even trivial variation upon the insistent motif—and the span of the character covers a period of twenty years! In all the world, there probably has never been a single man as inviolable as this stage character of Miss Gale's. He never lived outside of Bowery melodrama.

The trouble with Miss Gale is perfectly clear. She looks down upon the theatre. To her, the stage is the place where good novels go when they die. As an example of this conviction on her part, one need only consider the last act of her present exhibit. If ever there was an illuminating instance of happy ending bosh—the delusion of the condescending playwright—that instance is to be found here. It constitutes as shameless an affectation of superiority as a novelist turned playwright has shown. Walter Huston does all with the rôle of Pitt that the playwright permits him to, and Minna Gombel's Mrs. Pitt, save for a slight overzealousness in her obvious desire to get good notices from Alan Dale, Zit and other leading metropolitan critics, is a commendable creation.

VII

The Charlot revues in London, like the so-called Nine O'clock revues, have been built upon the principle that, in the music show, unlike in drama, the idea is more important than its treatment. Give the audience the idea and then ring down the curtain. Such is the theory, and, so far as music shows go, an excellent one.

The theory of the American revue producer, to the contrary, is that any comparatively fresh idea is worth at least a twenty-five minute sketch, the first three minutes of which are taken up with the idea and the last twenty-two of which are spent stalling until the stagehands have set up the fifteen thousand dollar set showing Hot Springs by moonlight and the girls have changed their South Sea Island costumes for costumes somewhat more relevantly Spanish. The Charlot revue at present on exhibition in New York follows the established London plan. It moves swiftly, lightly, amusingly, sprinkling agreeably under-developed fancies in its wake. It is as diverting in its contemptuous nonchalance as certain American revues are now and again tedious in their laborious overemphasis. And it enjoys, in the enriching persons of Beatrice Lillie and Gertrude Lawrence, two performers who are highly recommended to you for your more frolicsome moments.

VIII

The revival of Anna Cora Mowatt's "Fashion" at the Provincetown Playhouse is, save in the matter of such externals as costumes and scenery, not a particularly happy event. In addition to a direction that has burlesqued the old comedy to a point where even its original humors are often lost, there has been so desperate a slashing of the text by way of making the laughs follow quickly on one another's heels that much of the comic effect goes to pieces. "Fashion" is a cheap and tawdry play, but not so cheap and tawdry as this revival seeks superiorly to make out. If Sheridan's "School for Scandal" were cut with as deliberate and venomous a cruelty, it, too, would seem just as ridiculous.

THE LIBRARY

By H. L. MENCKEN

Cheating the Mortician

PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE UNITED STATES, by Harry H. Moore. New York: Harper & Brothers.

THIS large and formidable work should be read in the light of Dr. Raymond Pearl's "The Biology of Death," for in general it is rather romantically optimistic, and the author shows little capacity for differentiating between public health measures that are scientific, effective, and above all, socially useful and profitable, and those that are merely sentimental and uplifting. That the death-rate in the United States is declining is known to everyone, but the rapidity of its decline, I believe, is popularly overestimated, and there is far too much tendency to give all of the credit to health legislation and to the various official and private agencies that operate under cover of that legislation. Many of the latter, it is probable, really accomplish nothing at all, and some of them do a great deal of harm. The unfit are preserved to reproduce their kind, and devices that might benefit the fit are not only neglected, but even opposed.

I point, for an example, to the case of the venereal diseases. These maladies, it must be obvious, are anything but selective. That is to say, they do not help to eliminate the unfit. The individual who has them and recovers from them transmits no immunity to his descendants; moreover, he is quite as apt to suffer permanent damage from them if he is otherwise perfectly healthy as if he is a half-dead weakling. If they select out a class for extermination, indeed, it is probably the best class of young men, at least physically. Yet little is done by any governmental agency to combat them intelligently. They are chiefly attacked, when they are attacked at all,

on moral grounds. The young are besought eloquently to avoid the wickedness which brings them on. This exhortation, as we all know, is usually ineffective. Nature, having no morals, sweeps aside the warnings of the sex hygienists. And meanwhile there are devices readily at hand that would, if systematically applied, diminish the incidence of these diseases by at least a half. Why are they not employed?

They are not employed simply because their employment, in the opinion of the sex hygienists, would encourage wickedness by making it safe. In other words, they are not employed because the sex hygienists are not really hygienists at all, but moralists. Their primary desire is not to diminish the venereal diseases; it is to lift the whole youth of the land to the degree of virtue that they advocate. Their horror at the spectacle of hundreds of thousands of young men wrecked by syphilis and gonorrhea is bogus. I believe in all seriousness that many of them take a positive delight in it—that it is somehow agreeable to their moral minds to see a sinner so ferociously punished. If I am wrong, then why do they oppose so violently every genuinely scientific effort to put down both diseases? Why is their literature so heavy with moral fulminations, and so bare of the news that a simple ointment, applied *after* exposure, is sufficient to prevent gonorrhea and syphilis—and if not invariably, then at any rate in 95 cases out of a hundred?

During the war these uplifters fell upon the Army and Navy with their warning pamphlets, their vice crusades and their pious lectures, and there followed a great plague of venereal diseases in both Services. In the Army the medical officers, after a hard struggle against the moralists,

managed to apply scientific prophylactic measures on a large scale, and there ensued a sharp decline in both maladies; in some camps, indeed, they almost disappeared. In the Navy there was harder sledding, for the Hon. Josephus Daniels forbade the work on moral grounds. But all the more intelligent medical officers, I am informed, disregarded that prohibition, and so the jolly jack tars were also disinfecting. This process of medical bootlegging rescued thousands of young men from invalidism and death. And now the moral hygienists claim the credit for saving them! The business was accomplished, it appears, not by the salts of silver and mercury, but by the evangelistic labors of Y. M. C. A. secretaries!

The Army medical records, though they have been attacked by moralists, prove conclusively that the prophylactic measures I have mentioned actually work—that it would be perfectly possible, applying them in an energetic manner, to reduce the incidence of venereal disease in any American city by at least a half in one year—that all such maladies might be made as rare as leprosy or cholera in America by ten years of concentrated and unsentimental effort. It is not done simply because any proposal to undertake it, in any American community, would be violently opposed by all Puritans—because any man undertaking it would be denounced as a promoter of sexual vice. The menace of syphilis is necessary, it is argued by these Christian publicists, in order to keep the young generation from emulating the morals of the barnyard. Is it so, indeed? They why doesn't the menace of syphilis work better now? Why is it that, in the face of warnings from every pulpit and every school-room desk in the land, the pestilence continues almost unabated?

The obvious remedy—the only one, in truth, that shows any sign of working at all—is to throw all the Pecksniffian literature of the sex hygienists overboard, and proceed against the spirochaetae and the gonococci as we proceed against the ma-

laria protozoa—that is, with chemical agents, devoid of moral purpose. To withhold from the youth of the land the means of protecting themselves against venereal disease on the ground that such disease is usually produced by voluntary acts, and that such acts are immoral—this is as idiotic as it would be to abandon the war upon tuberculosis on the ground that many consumptives are brought to bed by drinking too much, by sitting up too late at night, and by consulting fashion rather than thermometry in the selection of their underwear. Preventive medicine should not concern itself with such considerations. The moment it ceases to be impersonal, that moment it ceases to be scientific, and becomes the sport of all sorts of quacks and fanatics. Its aim is not to punish the guilty, but to safeguard the innocent. If it cannot achieve the latter purpose without neglecting the former, then it must neglect the former. To argue otherwise is to argue that we should abandon science altogether and go back to priestcraft.

I note that Mr. Moore, in his discussion of venereal diseases, is careful to avoid specific mention of chemical prophylaxis. He ascribes their decline during the war to "a program of preventive measures in operation under the direction of the Commissions on Training Camp Activities, . . . and *subsequent* measures," but he very discreetly fails to mention what those "subsequent measures" were. The fact offers a very fair measure of his book.

A Modern Masterpiece

THE POET ASSASSINATED, by Guillaume Apollinaire, translated from the French, with a Biographical Notice and Notes, by Matthew Josephson. New York: *The Broom Publishing Company*.

WHATEVER may be said against the young literary lions of the Foetal School, whether by such hoary iconoclasts as Ernest Boyd or by such virginal presbyters as Dr. Farrar, the saving fact remains that the boys and girls all have, beneath their sombre false faces, a sense of humor, and are not shy about playing it upon one

another. Such passionate organs of the movement as *Broom*, the Chicago *Literary Times*, *Secession*, and the *Little Review* print capital parodies in every issue, many of them, I believe, deliberate and malicious—parodies of Ezra Pound by the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, of the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven by E. E. Cummings, and of E. E. Cummings by young Roosevelt J. Yahwitz, Harvard '27. Ah, that the rev. seniors of the Hypoendocrinal School were as gay and goatish! Ah, specifically, that Dr. Paul Elmer More would occasionally do a salacious burlesque of Dr. Brander Matthews, and that Dr. Matthews would exercise his forecastle wit upon the Urbana, Ill., silurian, Prof. Fred Lewis Pattee!

In the present work, beautifully printed by the *Broom* Press, there is jocosity in the grand manner. For almost a year past—a geological epoch among such neologomaniacs—the syndics of the movement have been whooping up one "Guillaume Apollinaire." When this "Apollinaire" died in 1918, they lamented, there passed out the greatest creative mind that France had seen since the Middle Ages. He was to Jean Cocteau as Cocteau was to Eugène Sue. His books were uncompromising and revolutionary; had he lived he would have done to the banal prose of the Babbitts of letters what Eric Satie has done to the art of the fugue. Such news was not only printed in the *Tendenz* magazines that come and go; it was transmitted by word of mouth from end to end of Greenwich Village. More, it percolated to graver quarters. The estimable *Dial* let it be known that "Apollinaire" was "a profound influence on the literature and perhaps still more on the art and spirit of this modern period." Once, when Dr. Canby was off lecturing in Lancaster, Pa., his name even got into the *Literary Review*.

This electric rumor was helped to prosperity by the fact that specific data about the New Master were extremely hard to come by. His books seemed to be

rare—some of them, indeed, unprocurable—, and even when one of them was obtained and examined it turned out to be largely unintelligible. He wrote, it appeared, in an occult dialect of the modern *langue d'oïl*, partly made up of esoteric and pathological slang from the military and penal establishments of the Third Republic. He gave to old words new, mysterious meanings. He kept wholly outside the vocabulary at the back of "College French." Even returning exiles from Les Deux Magots and La Rotonde, specialists in French philology, were baffled by some of his phrases; all that these experts would venture was that they were unprecedented and probably obscene. But the Village, as everyone knows, does not spurn the cabalistic; on the contrary, it embraces and venerates the cabalistic. So "Apollinaire" grew in fame as he became inscrutable. Displacing Cocteau, Paul Morand, Harry Kemp, T. S. Eliot, André Salmon, Paul Valéry, Maxwell Bodenheim, Jean Giraudoux, Ezra Pound and all the other gods of that checkered dynasty, he was lifted to first place in the Valhalla of the Advanced Thinkers. It was "Apollinaire's" year. . . .

The work before us is the pricking of the bladder—a jest highly effective, but somewhat barbarous. M. Josephson simply translates "Apollinaire's" masterpiece, adds an *apparatus criticus* in the manner of T. S. Eliot, and then retires discreetly to wait for the yells. They will make a dreadful din, or I am no literary pediatrician! For what does "The Poet Assassinated" turn out to be? It turns out to be a dull pasquinade in the manner of a rather atheistic sophomore, with a few dirty words thrown in to shock the *booboisie*. From end to end there is not as much wit in it as you will hear in a genealogical exchange between two taxicab drivers. It is flat, flabby and idiotic. It is as profound as an editorial in the New York *Tribune* and as revolutionary as Ayer's Almanac. It is the best joke pulled off on the Young Forward-Lookers since

Eliot floored them with the notes to "The Waste Land."

M. Josephson, alas, rather spoils its effect by rubbing it in—that is, by arguing solemnly that "Apollinaire" was of romantic and mysterious origin—that his mother was a Polish lady of a noble house and his father "a high prelate of the Catholic Church"—that he was born at Monte Carlo and baptized in Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome. This is too much. "Apollinaire," I make no doubt, was, like all Frenchmen of humor, a German Jew. His father was a respectable waiter at Appenrodt's, by name perhaps Max Spritzwasser: hence the *nom de plume*. His mother, I venture, was a Mlle. Kunigunda Schmidt.

Art Criticism

CHINESE PAINTING AS REFLECTED IN THE THOUGHT AND ART OF LI LUNG-MIEN, by Agnes E. Meyer. New York: Duffield & Company.
WILLIAM GLACKENS, by Forbes Watson. New York: Duffield & Company.

GEORGES SEURET, by Walter Pach, New York: Duffield & Company.

A HISTORY OF ART, by Dr. G. Carotti, revised by Mrs. Arthur Strong, Litt.D., LL.D. Three volumes. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.

THE book on Glackens by Forbes Watson and that on Seuret by Walter Pach belong to a series called "The Arts Monographs," edited by Mr. Watson. Their appearance simultaneously with Mrs. Meyer's searching and beautiful work on Li Lung-Mien, issued by the same publisher, must inevitably direct attention to their superficiality as criticism and their poverty as printing. Mr. Watson is so careless as an editor that in his own brief and vague essay on Glackens he permits himself a reference to a plate (page 16) that is not to be found where he says it is. But the printing in both of these monographs is far worse than the text. Any competent commercial engraver could make plates just as good, and any self-respecting printer, if he took the trouble, could print them better.

Mrs. Meyer's book, now appearing in a second edition, is immeasurably more workmanlike. Her plates, though they

are unfortunately few in number, are carefully done in collotype, and her text is painstaking, accurate and extremely interesting. Li Lung-Mien belonged to the Sung period (960-1280), but she by no means confines her discussion to the Chinese painting of that time. Instead she attempts a study of the whole history of Chinese art, with particular reference to its grounding in Chinese culture. The relationship has been intimate from the earliest days. The painting of the West, especially in the modern period, has tended to isolate itself in an artificial world of its own creation. Painters are no longer citizens like the rest of us, interested in taxes, Teapot Domes, the price of wheat and the evidence for the Virgin Birth, but inhabitants of an Alsatia of their own, and highly disdainful of everything going on beyond its borders. Not so with the Chinese. Li Lung-Mien, like the great painters who went before him and those who followed after him, was primarily an interpreter of Chinese thought and the Chinese spirit—a social historian and philosopher even before he was a painter. His paintings thus retain the glow of life after eight hundred years. They are not merely pretty things; they are documents in the cultural history of a great race.

It is unfortunate that the Western world knows the art of the Chinese chiefly through its imitation by their intellectual poor relations, the Japanese. This is almost as if the architecture of the Greeks were known only through the parodies of it perpetrated by official architects at Washington. The Japanese owe almost everything they have to the Chinese, and they have debased and vulgarized everything. That they have surpassed their masters in mere technical skill is not to be gainsaid; even the worst of their work shows a great deal of cleverness. But they lack the simple dignity of the Chinese in the fine arts precisely as they lack it in life. They are an efficient but inferior people. The Chinese move less swiftly, but accomplish a great deal more. In almost every field of

art, from architecture to painting and from the design of fabrics to gem-cutting, they can show work of the very highest quality. Nothing they attempt seriously is ever cheap and obvious.

The Carotti "History of Art" is probably the most useful handbook of the subject obtainable in English. Its three volumes proceed no further than the end of the Middle Ages, but from that period back to the dawn of architecture in Egypt they sweep the whole field in an extraordinarily comprehensive and satisfying manner. The present edition presents no less than 1257 illustrations. All of them, of course, are necessarily small, and in some cases their scale conceals or muddles detail, but in the main they serve their purpose admirably. Not one of them is superfluous; each actually illustrates and clarifies the text. That text is succinct, well-informed and well-arranged.

Three Gay Stories

THE HIGH PLACE, by James Branch Cabell. New York: Robert M. McBride & Company.

ANTIC HAY, by Aldous Huxley. New York: The George H. Doran Company.

THE BLIND BOW-BOY, by Carl Van Vechten. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

THREE capital comedies for marionettes—that of Mr. Cabell, perhaps, showing the most adept workmanship and that of Mr. Van Vechten being the most novel in plan. "The High Place" is in the manner of the celebrated "Jurgen," and all the ground that the author seemed to lose in the first successor to "Jurgen," to wit, "Figures of Earth," is here recovered in a handsome style, with some gains further on. "The High Place," indeed, is far more competently put together than "Jurgen." The fundamental idea is simpler; the structure is less complex and dispersed. In brief, the melancholy story of a dream come true. Florian de Puysange has a vision in youth of the perfect maiden, Melior. Her beauty is beyond all other conceivable beauty; she is perfect as the seraphim are perfect. But not unattainable! Florian hacks his way to her through dragons and monsters;

he employs magicians to aid him; he is helped both by the Devil and by a holy saint. In the end he wins his Melior, and discovers—That she is a shrew? No; nothing so obvious. He discovers that she is an unbearable and incurable bore.

The tale has charm almost without measure. It is clear-running, it is ingenious, and it is full of truly delightful detail. Mr. Cabell was never more shrewd, sardonic, iconoclastic, daring. He has made a romance that is captivating in itself, and yet remains a devastating *reductio ad absurdum* of all romance. It is as if the species came to perfect flower in a bloom that poisoned itself. I praise it no more, but pass on to its defects, of which there are two. The first issues out of the fact that the author appears to be down with a bad case of pronounophobia; in particular, the pronouns of the third person seem to affright him. The result is a multiplicity of such sentences as this one: "Thus it was not until the coming of Spring that Florian rode away from the Hôtel de Puysange, wherein he had just passed the first actually unhappy period of Florian's life." Why not "his," for the second "Florian"? The sentence is botched as it stands—and a botched sentence in Cabell stands out as brilliantly as a good one in D. H. Lawrence. A worse defect comes at the very end of the book. Cabell brings it up to a logical and delightful finale, and then tacks on a banal chapter explaining that Florian's adventures in two worlds have been but the fancies of a dream—that he has never actually wooed, won and married the incomparable Melior, that he is still a romantic boy asleep under a magic tree. It is almost as bad as if he had added a moral chapter advocating the World Court and the Coolidge idealism. Still worse, he prints a second appendix hinting plainly that Florian has been called back to life and youth in order to open the way for a sequel. Such crimes against sense and decency are too gross to be punished in literary courts. If there is a

secular arm in Virginia, let Cabell be handed over to it.

Messrs. Huxley and Van Vechten both suffer from the fact that the burlesque modern novel is very hard to write—that the slightest letting down reduces it to mere whimsicality and tediousness. Even Max Beerbohm, in "Zuleika Dobson," the best specimen of the genre yet produced, fell into that slough more than once. Huxley and Van Vechten do it whenever they try to be logical—whenever they abandon pure fancy for attempts to get an intelligible sequence into the events they deal with. Both start off better than they end—Huxley with his school-master who is inspired by the hard oaken pews in the school chapel to invent pneumatic panta-

loons—Van Vechten with his rich father who deliberately puts his son to learning all the things that other rich fathers devote themselves so futilely to keeping unknown. The Van Vechten notion is the more amusing, and makes what most readers will probably regard as the better story. But both tales are full of a fine gusto and neither ever grows dull, even when it grows thin. Human life is here depicted, not as a sort of continuous surgical operation, with overtones of Freudian suppression, as in the gloomy novels of the realists, but as gay, senseless and orgiastic. Is this realism, too? Is it, in fact, a more penetrating and accurate realism than that of the orthodox realists? There are days when I so suspect.

REVIEWS BY OTHER HANDS

The Popularization of Science

SOCIAL LIFE AMONG THE INSECTS, by William Morton Wheeler. New York: *Harcourt, Brace & Company*.

STUDIES IN EVOLUTION AND EUGENICS, by S. J. Holmes. New York: *Harcourt, Brace & Company*.

THE WRITINGS of scientific men, in the main, fall into two groups. The learned professor of palaeontology, for example, devotes himself regularly (*a*) to the production of profound tracts in which, with a minimum of literary grace and a maximum of technicality, he exposes to his peers the results of his conquests within the narrow field of his researches, and occasionally and by way of relaxation (*b*) to the composition of more lightsome essays for the public eye, in which the wider bearings of his subject are set forth with such rhetorical charm as has been vouchsafed him.

What can be the object of the man of science who tries to find readers beyond the circle of his colleagues? Certainly he cannot look for appreciation among the great masses of the people, the readers of Brisbane, Guest and Dr. Crane; all he may expect, if he makes himself intelligible, to

them, are ridicule, opposition, and even persecution. Explain to a Kansas New Thoughter that a live horse, properly treated, will yield a cure for diphtheria and he will found an anti-vivisection society; argue to a Southern Congressman that he is a mammal and he will see that you are kicked out of the State University. It is clear, then, that the investigator of natural phenomena, in his effort to reach the lay mind, must address himself only to the more intelligent among the people, the civilized and cultivated minority, who, if they know little or nothing of biology or physics, are nevertheless accustomed to ordered thought and somewhat inured to the impact of novel ideas.

But just here a new difficulty arises. Such an audience is not content with incontrovertible facts; it demands literary quality, wit, a humane cynicism, a viewpoint at least as sophisticated as its own. It refuses absolutely to be bored with pedantry or tortured by bad style, however worthy of respect may be the ideas presented. These considerations serve to account for the numerous and conspicuous failures as well as for the occasional

successes to be met with in the literature of scientific popularization, and they must be duly regarded in any appraisal of such writings. The two books under review are widely different in character but both are clearly intended to appeal to readers outside the limited group of the technically initiated. Granting their accuracy, how do they stand in the light of the requirements just set forth?

Dr. Wheeler is easily first among American students of the insect world. He is a professor, but his mind is clear, disciplined, and disillusioned, and in his writings the reader never fails to sense a background of intimate acquaintance with the culture of the ancient world, tempered by wide and well assimilated reading in all the fields of modern thought. Though his life has been primarily devoted to technical research he has retained a broad outlook and has known how to relate his specialty to the affairs of men in general. His literary style is clear and precise, of course, in passages of mere exposition, but it is always fluent and easy to read and often charmingly allusive. Here is evidently one anointed of God to preach the gospel to the scribes and Pharisees.

In this new book on social insects will be found a masterly survey of what is known about the subject, beautifully illustrated and organized with a rigorous regard for scientific exactness, well masked by an easy manner. The main topics discussed are the social beetles, wasps solitary and social, bees solitary and social, ants with their strange associates and degraded appetites, and the termites or white ants. A documentary appendix of world-wide scope provides an extraordinary array of references to recent publications of relevant bearing, calculated to delight the seeker out of original sources.

The fundamental attitude of the author in dealing with his subject may be described as philosophical. The facts are stated, and without sentimental or melodramatic nonsense, but always there is the search for the underlying principle, the

unifying correspondence, revealing the evolutionary relation between the solitary insect which provides fully and in advance for offspring that it cannot live to see and the communal ant or bee, whose society is based upon parental longevity. In the inevitable comparison, moreover, human society is seen to be the same at bottom. "The whole trend of modern thought is toward a greater recognition of the very important and determining rôle of the irrational and the instinctive, not only in our social but also in our individual lives. The best proof of this is to be found in the family, which by common consent constitutes the primitive basis of our society, just as it does among the insects, and the bonds which unite the human family are and always will be physiological and instinctive." And it is further shown that even in the matter of social heredity, use of tools, employment of other animals, and communication between individuals there is a similar identity in general. In brief, Dr. Wheeler's book is a sound and readable introduction to one of the least familiar but most important fields of scientific research.

It is unfortunately impossible to give as high a place to Professor Holmes' disjointed work on human genetics. The contrast between this series of unequal and unrelated essays and the unified and satisfying Wheeler treatise is painful indeed. Nor can criticism be disarmed by the prefatory apology: "The present volume makes no claim to unity of treatment." Such a claim is always futile. One can only observe that if the reprinting of scattered scientific articles must result in such depressing incoherence, it would be far better to rework their material into an integrated form, or, if that be too laborious, to let it fade into oblivion. It is quite true that the ideas conveyed in Dr. Holmes' sketches are perfectly sound, but this, as we have seen, is not to the point; they have a certain value for the professionally interested, but they are hopeless for the layman. Their style is dull, pedantic, and

often heavily obscure, as witness (page 117): "If we count so much upon nurture to carry civilization to greater heights, we should not forget that the primary condition of the greatest efficacy of nurture is afforded by a rich endowment of natural gifts." There is some elephantine playfulness in the essay on misconceptions of eugenics. But inelegance, stolidity, and a basic lack of integration form a combination too strong to be offset by such stray virtues as the book can boast.

H. M. PARSHLEY

Walter von Molo

AUF DER ROLLENDEN ERDE, by Walter von Molo. Munich: *Albert Langen*.

IN THIS, his latest novel, von Molo shows the ultra-modern side of his equipment as a novelist. It belongs, not to his series of historical romances, but to the category of his "Liebes-Symphonie," a collection of four searching novelettes on the subject of love and marriage. What interests him in the latter works is the enormous complexity of modern civilization, not only in its outward manifestations but also in its echoes in the tortured life of the individual. His hero in "Auf der rollenden Erde" (On This Rolling Globe) is one who, facing it, is not daunted by it, but strives to find in it a formula that man may live by. Man, in von Molo's philosophy is not good; on the contrary, he is selfish and bad. But he may yet *become* good; in his very selfishness there are possibilities of benefit to himself and others.

Walter von Molo, born in Austria in 1880 and partly of Italian origin, is one of the most successful and at the same time one of the most forceful and important novelists of present-day Germany. Trained as an electric engineer, he spent his early manhood as a patent expert in the Austrian government service, contributed extensively to technical journals, and wrote a text-book on automobile speedometers.

He began as a novelist with a story of the turf, followed it with a society novel, and then wrote "Klaus Tiedemann," a capital story about a business man. But his most popular work, and perhaps his best work, has been done in the field of the historical romance. His turning-point came when he discovered Schiller as a hero. In his two volumes the poet becomes the spirit of eternal youth. They are not history, but they are unquestionably literature.

From Schiller he turned to Frederick the Great. In "Fridericus," the first volume of a trilogy, he got far beyond mere hero worship and even beyond mere aesthetic delight in a great genius. What he had launched into, indeed, was more than an historical romance; it was a sort of vast epic of the German people, and especially of their struggle for freedom. The public response was stupendous; a Frederick cult was instantly established; the hero of the Seven Years' War moved over from history into German mythology. There followed "Luise," a human and appealing picture of the heroine of the War of Liberation, and after that "Das Volk erwacht" (A People Awakes), a sonorous and moving song to liberty. The hero here is no longer a king, but the people. This year the three volumes will be republished together as "Der Roman meines Volkes" (The Romance of My People). Later on, von Molo's collected works will appear in six volumes.

Von Molo stands clear of all the violent movements that now agitate German letters. His style is highly condensed and at times takes on an effect almost of breathlessness; it is wholly free from the usual German heaviness and intricacy. But his greatest merit lies in his fine intuitions as a psychologist. His portraits are absolutely living. At home he has already made a very brilliant mark; inevitably he is bound to be heard from abroad.

FRIEDRICH SCHÖNEMANN

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